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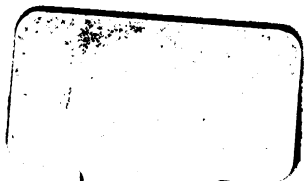


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THE

LAST DAYS OF THE SAVIOUR,

OR

HISTORY OF THE LORD'S PASSION.

FROM THE GERMAN OF

Hermann

OLSHAUSEN.

MORS CHRISTI, VITA MUNDI.

BOSTON:

JAMES MUNROE & COMPANY.

1839.

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P R E F A C E .

THE treatise, of which a translation is here given, is taken from the Commentary on the New Testament, by Doct. Hermann Olshausen, of the University of Königsberg, Prussia. It constitutes the second division of the second volume of that singularly interesting work.

As a commentator, Olshausen unites excellencies, that are rarely found together in the same mind. He is remarkable for fidelity of verbal criticism, and also for power and beauty of moral portraiture. Those, who may differ from him in opinion, cannot but admire the graphic vividness of his descriptions, and his success in bringing out the spiritual sense of the text. Although, for

instance, many may think he insists too much upon his favorite doctrine of the peculiar and glorified body of our Lord, yet even these will read the passages, in which this doctrine is most urged, with interest, and will find pleasure and profit in his interpretation of the facts of the resurrection.

The translator differs from the author in some doctrinal points, but he has received so much instruction from his pages, that he gladly makes an humble effort to unfold them to the English reader. He has not, of course, thought proper to alter or omit any of the author's doctrinal views. He has taken the liberty, however, to abridge several passages, and to omit some verbal criticisms, which seemed too minute or technical to add to the interest or usefulness of the work. To fill the following pages with criticisms of Greek and Hebrew words,

would harm the object, which the translator has in view. Perhaps the present undertaking might be called a selection, rather than a translation, although nothing essential in the author has been omitted.

Those, who are disposed to admire the deep religious feeling, so characteristic of the German mind, will find in this little work much, that is to their taste, while those, who are ready to start at the bug-bear, Neology, that word so indiscriminately applied, will find nothing here to alarm them.

That this volume may do something to aid the unlearned Christian, and may not be without use to the biblical scholar, in their attempts to understand more fully the most important of all passages in the history of the Church and the world, is the sincere prayer of the translator.

Nashua, N. H., 1839.

NOTE. — The author refers to the following special treatises upon the passages of Scripture, considered in this part of his work.

J. D. Michaelis. Explanation of the History of the Burial and Resurrection of Christ. Halle, 1783. With a Supplement, containing the fifth of the Wölfenbittel Fragments, with remarks, by J. D. Michaelis. Halle, 1785.

J. W. Henneburg. Commentary on the Sufferings and Death of Christ. Leipsic, 1822. Commentary, by the same, on the Burial, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus. Leipsic, 1826.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE accounts in the four Gospels of the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ, form in themselves so harmonious a whole, that we call them the Passion-history, and devote to them a separate consideration. All our canonical Gospels have not only, as its importance demands, treated this part of our Lord's history with peculiar exactness and predilection, in as much, as they give us such detailed accounts of a few days, as to distinguish this from the other parts of the Gospel history ; but, aside from the manner of representation, an entirely different character is expressed in the portraiture of our Saviour, from what we discover in the preceding pages of the Gospel. Although the garb of lowliness and poverty enrobed our Lord, from the manger to the cross, yet

heretofore a surprising majesty appeared under this garb. Although Jesus had not where to lay his head, he still ruled as Prophet and King. He spake, as never man spake, he commanded the hearts of his followers and reigned in the midst of his enemies, who, held by the viewless bands of the Spirit, could not limit the broad compass of his activity ; he exercised unlimited power over the forces of nature, ruled the storm, walked over the waves of the sea, fed thousands with a few loaves, healed the sick, cast out evil spirits. But in these last days of his earthly pilgrimage, this radiant glory, which surrounded him, vanishes altogether. His speech, alike gentle and powerful, is silent before the multitude of hearers, whom it had addressed in vain ; Jesus confines himself to the little company of his disciples, and strives to plant in their hearts the undying germ of the Kingdom of God ; his glorious miracles cease, everything brilliant, everything extraordinary vanishes, the poverty and lowliness of the outer being reached inward through the whole soul ; he sinks,

as it were step by step, into deepest humiliation. The eye, awake to the conception of true majesty and beauty, readily sees in this utter uncomeliness, the secret glory of the Heavenly image, beaming forth the more purely and clearly. Although the active virtues shine the stronger, yet the passive ones are truly greater and the harder to exercise. These have their perfect work in Christ; the record of his sufferings breathes but a heavenly forbearance, gentleness, patience. ,

Even if we consider the person of Christ as merely human, the story of his sorrows presents a touching and deeply affecting image. But the higher view of his person alone can give the true idea of the events, which the Evangelists record of our Lord's last days on earth. The faith, that in Christ Jesus, the Word of the Father was made flesh, that all the prophets have spoken of him and his appearing, that he was appointed to raise up that, which was sunk in guilt by the fall of man, and to restore the lost — this faith first gives to the story of the Pas-

sion the full meaning, which belongs to it, and shows the connexion between the sufferings and death of Jesus, and his resurrection, as the object of the most momentous concern. His sufferings and death do not appear to the eye of faith, as something brought on by the power of circumstances, as a sacrifice for a truth, an exalted idea ; but as a free-will offering of the Son of God, for the reconciliation of a sinful world ; and his resurrection, as the necessary consummation of his death of pure love, since its all-conquering power subdued death, and life could not be held in its bonds. Thus as we see in the history of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus, the middle point of the Gospel ; the fountain of new life, which rests in him, forms peculiarly the idea of it. It will seem less improbable to us then, than it usually appears to men, that the minute circumstances in this history, which are very often specially stated, constitute important features in this most remarkable picture ; all will have a meaning for us, because it relates to Him, and to Him at these holy moments.

The importance is not to be given to the outward events as such; a nobler, a far deeper idea of the history presses upon the believer, according to which we discover in the particular circumstances, not mere accidents, but an order divinely willed, which by deeds and events speaks to the world like a creating Fiat. Although henceforth, the mouth of truth was silent, and crucified love gave no more admonitions to men, still the whole career of our Lord speaks, and he still speaks with more life and power to the world of sin, through the events, by which he finished his course, than all the warnings and exhortations of the prophets and men of God. The suffering, dying, and victoriously rising Saviour, with all the various attendant circumstances, affords a complete model of the great contest between the powers of Good and Evil, about which the world's history turns in its development. In this view, the history of the Passion takes its deep, we may say, its infinite character. If, in the history of the last moments of Christ on earth, we look only at the outward

side, there the griefs of many another sufferer may seem in some respects more severe, as to the torments heaped upon him ; in some respects more imposing, through the firmness and consequence of the struggler, while Jesus appeared anxious and faltering in his inmost soul, (a circumstance, which will be more closely examined in the consideration of the agony of the Lord in Gethsemane,) in some respects more attractive through the abundance of striking occurrences in the contest. But viewed on the inner side, every other historical occurrence can be no more compared to the sufferings and death of Christ, than any human teacher can be compared with our Lord. While it is the most exalted office of an earthly sage, to be a genuine inquirer after truth, Christ himself is the actual truth, which the former seeks. All the rays of shining virtues, which have appeared in all the earthly champions and sufferers for truth and right, are united in him, as the sun, and melted into an unutterable unity.

THE
LAST DAYS OF THE SAVIOUR,
OR
HISTORY OF THE LORD'S PASSION.

LAST DAYS OF THE SAVIOUR.

PART FIRST.

ON THE SUFFERINGS AND DEATH OF JESUS, CHRIST.

(Matt. xxvi., xxvii.; Mark xiv., xv.; Luke xxii., xxiii.;
John xviii., xix.)

BEFORE proceeding to the explanation of particulars, we give, in few words, a *general view* of the four Gospels, in regard to the order of events, in the portion of history we are considering. While John, as early as the thirteenth chapter, describes the Saviour's last supper with his disciples, (a description, which, together with the accompanying sayings of our Lord, reaches to chap. xvii. 9,) Mark comes much later to the description. It may hence seem, as if the joint consideration of all four Gospels, in

this section of Evangelical history, must have great difficulties. But upon a sufficient consideration, these difficulties appear far less than would be supposed. Except an account of the anointing by Mary at Bethany, which has already been considered in the exposition of John, the three Synoptical * Evangelists give no fact, which is to be placed before the last supper ; only in two short remarks, that are couched in general terms, the particulars of which have their explanation elsewhere, they speak of the wicked plotting of the Pharisees and the treachery of Judas. Hence the matter stands in such a way, that we have only two distinct accounts of the last supper of Jesus with his disciples ; one by John ; the second by the other Evangelists. The continued parallel narration of all four Evangelists, begins at John xviii. 1, where the capture of our Lord is related. In the history of the last supper, John

* This treatise following, and being part of, the exposition of John, the three other Gospels are therefore called Synoptical.

is the most explicit narrator, since he communicates in connexion all the sublime sayings, which our Lord uttered at the end of the meal to his disciples. But the case seems entirely reversed, in regard to that part of the Gospel history, which lies between the entry into Jerusalem and the last supper. Here John, together with Luke, appears the most brief, since he entirely omits all those important speeches and conversations, which Jesus, according to Matthew, who is the most explicit on this subject, held with the Pharisees, and with the disciples at Jerusalem. On account of these few points of contact between John and the Synopsists, until the capture of Jesus, the separate consideration of both accounts is desirable only up to that period. But from the period of our Lord's captivity, a satisfactory parallel consideration of the four narrations can be carried fully through.

SECTION I.

THE LAST SUPPER.

(Matt. xxvi. 17-35; Mark xiv. 12-31; Luke xxii. 7-38; John xiii. 21-29.)

OUR Lord had ended his great public ministry. His voice, which, in the days immediately before, had so powerfully spoken in warning, rebuke, exhortation, and prophecy, was silent. The perversity of the Pharisees, the unbelief of the people, had hindered its operation. But no perversity, no unbelief, could stay the exalted mission of Christ. The Redeemer had come to Jerusalem to the Feast, with the firm conviction of his approaching death, and he went boldly to this death, that from his downfall new life might spring up for a sinful world; that the Comforter might come, the Holy Spirit, who should remind the disciples of all their Lord had spoken, so that

they might be able to take up his words, that had apparently fallen powerless, and to establish their meaning and power for centuries and millions of years by the Scripture. — From the bustling world of festive Jerusalem the Saviour withdrew among the quiet circle of his disciples. The twelve, whom he had chosen to be the props and pillars of a new world, were the company, among whom Jesus had resolved to keep the festival. Even in the narrow band of his own followers the kingdom of evil had its representative. Not one of the disciples indeed was so grounded and established in goodness, in his inmost nature, that he could have resisted thoroughly the coming attack of the enemy. When the shepherd was slain, all the sheep were scattered; while only *one* had so opened his heart to the influence of evil, that he instead of a *friend* (although a very weak one) became an *enemy* of the Holy One of God. This unfortunate one, *Judas Iscariot*, was at first present among the twelve; but afterwards he left the circle, from which he had long been alien in spirit. The presence and the

withdrawal of this lost child most naturally give the meal a different character, and therefore it is divided into two *unlike parts*. The last part alone conveys the impression of a truly intimate communion of Jesus with his faithful ones, whose pure happiness was disturbed only at the view of the hour of parting and bitter suffering, that was now approaching. Hence the four narrators hasten over the first part: they give so much of it only, as is necessary to show what was the Lord's intercourse with his disciples, while Judas was present; but, with love and with all their hearts engaged, they dwell on the description of the second part of the supper, where the Saviour reveals himself in all the fulness of his Divine Nature. John in particular rests with longing delight on these moments, in which he leaned on the bosom of Jesus, as if he delayed to paint those later hours, whose image recalled must have so troubled him.

As to the individual incidents, which the Evangelists relate of the supper, it has already been remarked, that John communicates

some particulars of it different from the others, until John xiii. 21–29, which passage coincides with the narrations of the others. Only the departure in the account of Luke, both from John and Matthew and Mark makes a careful consideration necessary as to the course of particular events in the supper. Luke places the complaint of Jesus, about his betrayer after the instituting of the Holy Supper, while Matthew and Mark place it before that point. John, as has already been remarked, makes no mention of the instituting of the Eucharist, and therefore the passage accusing Judas cannot be connected with this event so satisfactorily. From the very idea of the Holy Supper, it is highly probable, that it must have been a feast of such intimate love and communion, that so alien a member, as Judas was, could have had no part in it. Not to mention that it would be opposed to the love and compassion of our Lord, to have allowed the traitor to have added to his guilt by partaking of the meal in an unworthy spirit. Another point in the narrative of Luke, which con-

flicts with the account of John, is the position of the "strife among the disciples, as to who should be greatest in the kingdom of God," immediately after the impeachment of the traitor. This altercation is connected undoubtedly, as the words of Luke intimate, with the washing of the disciples' feet. By this symbolic act, our Lord would exhibit condescending love, as the only true dignity in the kingdom of God. But John xiii. 4, shows that the washing of feet took place during the meal, and probably at the beginning; but the complaint about the traitor belongs in its position, as we have seen, before the supper; and this, according to the plain expression of Luke, immediately succeeds the Passover. We must accordingly say, that Luke has not been very explicit on these two points; following his account, it might be believed that Judas had shared in the Holy Supper, which; however, neither the narration of Matthew and Mark, nor the nature of the occasion signify. And, according to this, we might suppose that the disciples had striven together, even after the Holy Sup-

per, a supposition evidently opposed, as we learn from John, to their whole frame of feeling at the time. This circumstance of Luke's Gospel is evidently less to be attributed to the fact, that Luke was not present, (for this may equally well be said of Mark, who gives a pretty full account,) than to the idea, that he did not wish to give a full representation of what took place at this meal, but only aimed at giving a supplement. He therefore looked less at the course of events, than to the several accounts themselves. If we now take all four narrations together, the particular incidents at the last supper may be arranged in this manner. First, the Synopsists speak of the preparation for the feast ordered by Jesus. The words of the Saviour at the introduction of the meal, as well as the mention of the first cup, which was handed immediately after, are given only by Luke. Hereupon follows the strife of the disciples, as to who should be greatest in the kingdom of Heaven, with which the account of the washing of feet (which John alone gives) may be satisfactorily connected.

To this act the charge against Judas, and his consequent withdrawal, may be annexed. Upon his withdrawal, the love of the Saviour towards his own broke forth, from his heart, like a stream long confined, in the words, "Now is the Son of Man glorified;" the warning to Peter, which Mark only has, is probably next to these words. And then probably follows the instituting of the Holy Supper, the breaking up of the meal, and finally the sayings of Jesus, which he probably held with his disciples, standing in the hall. We now proceed to consider the particulars of the last supper in this order.

The nature of Gospel narratives demands, for their explanation, an account of the manner in which the Jews celebrated the Passover. John's representation requires this less, because it does not touch upon the peculiar form of this festival. But the narrative of Luke, in connexion with Matthew and Mark, makes the consideration of the Jewish custom indispensable. In regard to these, we have no information besides the ordinances in the Pentateuch, excepting more

modern notices, that are in the Talmud. It is in the highest degree probable, that the knowledge of the manner, in which this was celebrated, has been handed down by tradition correctly in all that is essential. The Passover, according to the Mosaic law, was, together with the Pentecost and Feast of Tabernacles, the great festival of the Jews. It was, as is well known, founded on the departure from Egypt, and had its name from the sparing of the first born. The name of the Paschal lamb, is derived from a Hebrew word, signifying to spare, and was applied to the feast itself, which is called in Greek Pascha. The Passover is sometimes called "the feast of the unleavened bread," since the use of such bread was peculiar to this feast. The sacrifice and partaking of a lamb formed the centre of this feast. The lamb was regarded as an offering for the sparing of the first born, and on the one hand had the true nature of a sacrifice, (in which the idea of an offering for another's sake is implied,) but on the other hand it was given for pleasure and enjoyment, because the feel-

ing of preservation was vividly excited by its sacrifice. It has of late been denied, that the Paschal lamb was a sacrifice at all, which, however, is expressly declared in the Mosaic law, (Exodus xii. 27 ; xxiii. 18 ; xxxiv. 25.) Even Hengstenburg, in his Christology, thinks it must be granted, that it was not an atoning sacrifice. This is entirely true in so far as it can neither be ranked as an expiatory, nor a sin offering, in which the idea of atonement was decidedly expressed ; since they did not use lambs for these purposes, and these offerings were entirely burnt, but the Paschal lamb was mostly eaten by those who offered it. Nevertheless the idea of substitution very plainly exists in the offering of the Paschal lamb, since with its blood the door posts of the dwellings of the Israelites were sprinkled, in order that the destroying angel might pass over. Hence it may be with the utmost propriety said, that the Paschal lamb has its own entirely peculiar character, that the characteristic of the expiatory together with the thank-offering is expressed in it, and even in this union

there is a most affecting prefiguration of the sacrifice of Christ, since in this the ground for the deepest sorrow is also the occasion for the purest joy. The Paschal lamb, as the first sacrifice instituted by God, as the germ of all others, contains in itself all these characteristics. By the tenth of the month, Nisan or Abib, the heads of families must, according to the law of Moses, select a ram or he-goat for sacrifice; it must be, like all animals for sacrifice, without blemish. On the 14th day of the same month, towards evening, the animal was slain in the Temple, (therefore the Passover could be celebrated only at Jerusalem,) and the meal prepared. For the proper celebration of the feast, which continued from the 15th to the 20th of Nisan, the dwelling was carefully cleaned of all leaven, and during the festival, unleavened bread, as bread of affliction, alone was used. The Paschal lamb was not to be boiled in water, but roasted by fire. It was eaten with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. Not more than twenty nor less than ten persons should be present at the meal, who were

to eat the whole lamb ; but if any was left, it was consumed by fire. The procedure at the time of the meal was also regulated ; and, according to the more recent account of the Talmud, was as follows. The master of the house, who officiated as priest, opened with a short prayer, and handed round a cup of wine, mingled with water, among those present. After all had drunken and washed their hands, the food already mentioned, the lamb, with the bitter herbs, with the unleavened bread, and some other dishes were served. In eating, the son asked the father of the house, what all this meant, and he replied, that it was done in remembrance of the departure from Egypt. Hereupon, the 113th and 114th Psalms were read, the first of which is an universal song of praise, and the second a song of triumph, in which the departure from Egypt is represented, as a mighty deliverance of Jehovah's. Next came the second cup, upon the partaking of which, the master of the house breaks the unleavened bread, (which consists of thin, flat cakes,) and divides it among the guests, who

eat it in the sauce of the bitter herbs. Here follows the third cup, which is called the cup of blessing, and to this is added the singing of Psalms 115 – 118. At the fourth cup, they read sometimes Psalms 120 – 137, which are called the great Hallel, and then ended with the fifth cup.

The accounts, which the Gospels give us of the Paschal supper of Jesus, agree essentially with this description. Our Lord officiated among his disciples, as head of a family and priest;—he uttered the prayers and songs, broke the bread, and distributed the cups of wine; but, above all, he comprehended the symbolical use of the Paschal feast in the deepest signification, and consecrated it to holy observances of a higher kind, which in the new Jerusalem, the community of the Lord, were to be repeated until the day of his coming.

After these general observations, we now proceed to consider the account of the Synopsists (Matt. xxvi. 17 – 19, and parallel passages) about *the preparation of the feast*. There is no reason to suppose anything mi-

raculous in Christ's sending forth two of his disciples, and in their finding the man with the vessel of water, and a room already prepared for them. The meaning of the Apostles coincides perfectly with the supposition, that our Lord had previously requested the man, who was probably inclined favorably towards him, to have the Passover celebrated in a chamber of his house, in company with the disciples. That Jesus did not in any way mention the name of the man, nor his abode to the disciples, whom he sent to make all ready, but merely gave a direction that would lead to the man, is very easily explained, as Theophylact and many others after him have remarked, on the supposition, that Judas Iscariot would not be aware before hand of the place, where the Passover was to be celebrated ; otherwise Judas might have induced the Priests to seize Jesus in the city before the meal, and it was very natural for the Saviour to wish to celebrate the sacred meal in peace and quietness with his own. On the way to the meal, Judas did not easily find the place, at which he could

withdraw without suspicion, and inform the Priests ; and when he was allowed by Jesus to depart, the night had so far come on, that Judas could not expect, even if he had gathered the officers of the law together, to find Jesus still in the city ; therefore he led them immediately to Gethsemane. What object could there have been for a miracle on such an occasion ? It may be said, that a miracle was needed to strengthen the faith of the disciples. But let us remember in the outset, that they betrayed no such weakness as to need a confirmation of faith. Moreover, after the infinitely sublimer miracles, which they had beheld, this fact was not important enough to confirm them much. And, finally, in order that the event should be regarded as miraculous, it must have been decided, that there could have been no previous concert. But since the narrators do not by a single word indicate this, the view of the matter above given is the only tenable one. Besides, the accounts of Luke and Mark are distinguished for their fulness and accuracy of detail. Both speak of the man with the

water-pitcher, who was to direct the two disciples, describe the condition of the chamber, destined for the feast, and Luke expressly names Peter and John, as the two disciples who had orders to make the arrangements for the evening.

The Synopsists are unanimous in fixing the time of this preparation on the first day of the feast of unleavened bread. By this is meant the day, upon which all leaven and all leavened bread is removed from the houses, and on the limit of both days, which, according to the Jewish custom, begins at six o'clock at sun-down — on the limit of 14th and 15th of Nisan, they slew the Paschal lamb, and opened the feast with partaking of it.*

But John's Gospel, when compared with the Synopsists, seems to present some diffi-

* According to the view of Rauch, the Paschal lamb was not eaten at the end, but at the beginning, of 14th Nisan, or between the 13th and 14th day, or from 3 to 9 in the afternoon, by our reckoning; an opinion, which is probably correct, and does much to remove difficulties.

culties. But these difficulties are easily removed. John xiii. 1, seems to speak of this preparation, as made the day *before the Passover* ; this apparent difference disappears, if we consider that John wrote for the Greeks, who did not, like the Jews, begin the day with sunset, and that therefore the 14th of Nisan might as well be called the *day before the Passover*, as (after six in the evening) it could be called the *first day of the feast*. Moreover the words of Jesus, connected with the date in John, do not stand in immediate connexion with the account of the last supper, but merely with the statement of the knowledge of Jesus, that his hour had come. In John xix. 14, 31, in which the day of Christ's death is called the preparation of the Passover, this expression can very simply be understood to mean the preparation day, preceding the Sabbath, which fell upon the Passover week, and therefore possessed a peculiar sanctity. The chief difficulty, however, lies in John xviii. 28, where the Jews are said to have avoided entirely Pilate's palace, lest they should be defiled,

“but that they might eat the Passover,” while Jesus is represented by the other Evangelists, as having celebrated it with his disciples the evening before.* When it is said that the Jews did not wish to defile themselves, “but that they might eat the Passover,” we can well suppose the word translated “Passover,” *Pascha*, to relate to an offering, which was offered the day after the regular Paschal feast. At the end of the first day of the

* Without following our author in his statement of the modes, in which different authors have sought to harmonize this seeming opposition, and his objections to these modes, we merely state the explanation, that to him appears most satisfactory. Let it be remarked, however, that he appears in the preceding note to doubt his own view, and to concede to that of Rauch, to whose opinion Tholuck has finally yielded. According to this view, Jesus partook of the Paschal lamb between the 14th and 15th of Nisan, and when it is said, that the day after, the Jews were unwilling to defile themselves, but that “they might eat the Passover,” we are to understand by the Passover, not the Paschal lamb, nor the *Chagigah*, but the feast of herbs and unleavened bread, which was continued for a week. For a full statement of this opinion, see *Biblical Repository*, January, 1834. — *Translator*.

Passover, a solemn sacrifice was made, which was called "Chagigah." This offering, like all others offered on that day, was called by a name derived from the Hebrew word, to spare, from which the word "Pascha" is also derived. Moreover it should be remembered, that entering a heathen abode defiled the Jews only for the same day. Therefore the entering the house of Pilate would keep the Jews away from the Chagigah, which occurred on the same day, but not from the Passover, which (pre-supposing Jesus to have died on the 14th Nisan) would have taken place on the following day, that is, after six in the evening. Tholuck and other distinguished commentators adopt this view.

By the preparation for the Passover, which was entrusted to Peter and John, we are to understand, not merely the arrangement of the chamber, but above all things the slaughter of the lamb. This must take place in the temple, and every Israelite exercised priestly privileges, as it were, on this day. Both the minute narrators describe the chamber, in which the meal was to be held, as an

upper room ready furnished. We have no particular information as to the master of the house himself. If Jesus had refrained from mentioning his name on account of Judas, Matthew surely might have named him afterwards, when he wrote his Gospel; yet he speaks of him only as a certain person. It is not improbable that Matthew withheld the name to avoid compromising the man, who must have been living, or at least his family, when Matthew wrote. That he was a follower of Jesus is not expressly said; but the words, "*my time is at hand*," render this highly probable. This expression cannot refer merely to the preparation of the meal, but to the whole Divine Mission of the Son, which now drew near completion. It is then highly probable, that the master of the house was a secret friend of Jesus, and thus regarded, the expression, *with thee I will eat the Passover*, conveys not merely the sense of a bare announcement, but also a mark of love in the Lord to his disciple: *I will keep the Passover at thy house with my disciples*. Like Zaccheus, this man is also to receive the

gracious favor of having his dwelling consecrated by the Lord in this way. That he himself was not present at this meal, is evident from the fact, that as head of the household, he must have officiated at the supper of the Paschal lamb with his own family. But even here the Saviour exercised the highest forbearance. Since he did not express himself against Judas openly before the other disciples, much less upbraid him, but allowed the betrayer a favorable occasion to withdraw.

The disciples overwhelmed at this disclosure from their master, and in their innocence seeking the guilt in themselves, rather than attributing it to any one else, even if they might mistrust the disposition of Judas, asked Jesus, is it I? According to the representation of Matthew and Mark, the Lord seems to have given this question a public answer; he who dippeth with me into the dish, the same is he. But the question of Judas, whether it were he, as given by Matthew, will appear entirely superfluous according to this view, and moreover such a public

reply is opposed to the forbearing manner, in which John represents the Savior to have acted. We must doubtless fill out the account in Matthew and Mark from John ; and believe that the Lord replied in a low tone to the question of John, to which Peter gave occasion : it is he to whom I shall give the sop. There yet remains some difference of statement, but by no means an essential one. According to Matthew and Mark, Judas dipped into the dish with Jesus, as soon as this was spoken, while according to John, Jesus dipped a sop for Judas and gave it him. No importance should be attached to this slight variation ; it was enough, that, without speaking the name, Jesus gave John a sign, by which he might know the betrayer. But in either case, we must allow, that John has given the correct view of the occurrence, and the others have recorded it in a modified form. The act of dipping into the dish, as spoken of by John, is very easily understood from the customs of the feast. The master of the house took from the Easter-cake a piece, which he dipped in the bitter herbs,

and handed to the company in turn. If we suppose that, at the moment of John's question regarding the betrayer, the turn of Judas had come, we easily understand what induced the Lord to select this token.

Jesus declares, that his betrayal was in accordance with the counsels of God, and yet denounces woe to the betrayer. The necessity of his betrayal was ordained by the will of God, and had been declared in the prophets. Still this necessity of fulfilling the decrees of the Almighty by no means destroyed the moral freedom of man. We cannot indeed explain how the foreknowledge and decrees of God are compatible with human freedom, but conscience, reason, and scripture alike declare, that God knows and rules all events, and that man is a moral agent and responsible for his actions. The very passage in which the necessity of Christ's betrayal is recorded, records also Christ's declaration of the fearful guilt and doom of the traitor. The declaration of John, that after the sop Satan entered into Judas, marks the depth of the traitor's degradation. I

cannot justify the opinion, that this expression is to be taken figuratively. If the existence of a kingdom of darkness is certain, we have reason to believe in its influence upon the human mind.

According to John's account, the execution of the dark design of Judas followed the sop, which the Saviour reached to him. It is not unlikely, that he either understood the question of the Evangelist to Christ, or suspected its meaning, in connexion with the subsequent conduct of Jesus, and that this inflamed his anger. It is worthy of remark, that thus the bread, which to the true disciples is a blessing, became to Judas a curse.

Matthew finally observes, that Judas asked, Is it I? and the Lord openly replied, Thou hast said. This circumstance appears to conflict with John's statement, according to which the design of Judas remained unknown to the disciples. The simplest solution of the difficulty is this: in shame and anger at finding himself detected, Judas probably stammered out the same question, as the other disciples had asked; either the disci-

ples did not notice it, or it was spoken so softly and quickly, as also the Lord's reply, that the disciples thought no more of it. — John and Peter, who knew him, as the betrayer, might not have thought the moment for executing his plan so near. According to the careful statement of John, the Saviour ordered Judas to hasten the execution of his purpose : *what thou doest, do quickly*. In these words, it is obvious, there is no command to perform the deed, but only to leave the circle of disciples, and hasten that which had already been decided upon. The disciples might easily have misunderstood the sense of these words, and even John, who knew the betrayer, might not think the time of the deed so near. Hence they make different conjectures as to his withdrawal ; but it is little likely, that since the darkness had already broken in, either purchases would be made or alms distributed. John closes his account with the graphic words : *it was night*. These words, besides referring to the preceding time of day mentioned, give the reader the idea, that it was the hour, in

which darkness has sway. With the withdrawal of this representative of darkness in the circle around the Lord, his love broke forth, like a stream long obstructed, in the words : Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him.

The conversation of the Lord with Peter very fitly follows the accusation of the traitor. The latter had entirely yielded to temptation, whereas Peter, although by nature subject to the attacks of the adversary, he also fell, yet was enabled by the sincerity of his heart to recover from his fall through repentance and faith, and this experience must have been of service to him, since it thoroughly broke down the old nature, and enabled him to become a yet more active laborer in the kingdom of God. The Saviour's allusion to this approaching fall must have produced a beneficial humility in the Apostle's mind, and prevented all arrogance in respect to the wretched Judas. These remarks must have preceded the establishment of the Supper, since the departure to the Mount of Olives immediately followed the Hymn of

thanksgiving at the close of the Supper, while the long addresses recorded by John, in which the conversation with Peter could have found no place, were made previously.

When Judas had left the chamber, Jesus addressed his disciples upon the coming woes, and told them, that they all should be offended of him that night. This saying may be well compared with the previous declaration, "One of you shall betray me!" it was calculated to damp all feelings of self-satisfaction. From the words of Christ, ye shall be offended of me this night, the remark of Peter, "Although all men may be offended, yet not I," makes the transition very easy to the address to him. "The severest struggle now awaits thee," was our Lord's reply. The expression, "Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat," conveys this idea: "There are seasons in the course of moral development, in which the whole power of evil approaches men with all manner of temptations: at such times, real goodness sustains itself, and impurity is brought to light."

In this sifting, Judas fell away like chaff, while Peter was made to fall, but he recovered himself again. Upon this point, the Lord prophetically enlightens him, and refers the victory of his faith to the prayer offered in Peter's behalf. This remarkable incident leads us to think of the subject of intercession. We cannot refrain from asking here, did the Lord intercede for Judas?—The scriptures do not affirm this; but from the very idea of supplication, we may answer the question in the following manner: Prayer, even when offered by the Saviour himself, cannot be considered to take away the freedom of him, for whom it is offered. It may *strengthen* the disposition of the mind already inclined to goodness, but it cannot force the mind, that is already opposed to goodness. Accordingly we may say: as long as Judas was struggling with himself, whether or not he should resign himself to the dark purpose of his heart, the Lord followed him with prayers, in order to secure the victory to the better part. But after he had fully given himself up to the purpose, the deed was

already virtually performed, and the power of the spirit in prayer would avail nothing, except to add to the guilt of a soul determined to resist its influences. The prayer for Peter was directed towards constancy in faith, not for truth or preservation from falling. The fall seems to have been needful for Peter, like a salutary crisis in severe diseases, in order to break up the old man, and secure the victory ever after to the new. Hence it came, that Peter held firm faith in the Lord's pardoning love, in order to recover from the fall. On this recovery from the fall through repentance and faith his peculiar zeal was founded ; after his conversion he became the rock of faith, on which all wavering and weakness were to be firmly fixed.

The natural security of Peter, his confidence in his own strength and good will were so great, that he did not regard this warning of the Saviour. Jesus foretold his denial of him in the plainest terms. We are not for a moment to doubt Peter's sincerity. He was sincere in his declarations, but in his inexperience, he did not know how often, by

Divine permission, all inward power is withdrawn from men, and how in such a state of nakedness and inward destitution, nothing can gain the victory, but humble faith in the power of God. In momentary feeling of his own power, and in haughty self-confidence he regarded himself as invincible, even in the severest conflict.

Christ now goes on to speak of his approaching sufferings, as the extreme point of his humiliation. He quotes the saying of Isaiah: "He shall be numbered with transgressors," and applies it to himself, (Luke xxii. 37.) With these latter hours of the power of darkness the Saviour compares the earlier seasons of blessing. The description of these seasons of blessing is given in words, which are taken from the instructions to the Apostles, as given in the tenth chapter of Matthew. Then all outward things were of no concern to them, and the fulness of outward blessings was an emblem of the spiritual power flowing into their hearts so abundantly. Now a season of trial and want ensues, in which everything, that can be pro-

cured, must be made ready. In so far as this, the connection is clear, and the sense of the figurative language quite intelligible. But there is a difficulty in the expression, "let him that hath no sword sell his garment and buy one." The only satisfactory explanation of this passage is found in supposing the word sword, as well as purse and scrip, to be employed in a figurative sense. Neither of the expressions refers to a journey, since no journey was to be taken; they refer merely to a state of preparation. Thus the expression, "sword," refers to defence, not bodily defence indeed, but spiritual. It is accordingly intended, that they should prepare the sword of the spirit. The sense of the passage is therefore as follows; "Before, in the days of blessing, the Lord took care of you and strove for you, you needed not prepare anything, all flowed towards you; but now in these evil days, you must employ every care and exertion, and gather together whatever means you possess available towards spiritual life; at least you need the sword of the spirit, in order to resist the evil day and

be master of the field ; purchase this therefore even by the severest effort, renounce every earthly good, even sell your very garments or most needful good, in order to attain the imperishable treasure and to receive its virtues." The disciples now misunderstood this inner sense of Christ's words, and thought only of metal swords, and said they already had some. The Saviour must have thought it useless at such a moment to go into a particular explanation of so simple a thing. The disciples were already too much fixed in their opinion, to allow of their being brought to the right point of view. The remark, "it is sufficient," appears to have been made, just as an evasive reply is given to children, when it is found impossible to make them understand. The expression conveys a kind of double sense, since it may refer either to the two swords, in the signification, "they are sufficient," or to the whole conversation, "enough of this matter, I see you do not understand me." The thought that there is irony in the remark, or that the sense is, "yes it is enough, your two swords would be a pretty

defence," does not seem to me to correspond with the earnest frame of our Lord's mind.

After this account of the preparation of the feast, the description of the feast itself follows. Towards evening, (therefore at the beginning of the 15th of Nisan,) Jesus sat down to eat with his disciples, all twelve of them, as the Synopsists unanimously state. Luke alone gives us the words, with which the Saviour introduces the meal, and the solemn opening of it. The words spring, as is natural, from the mention of his coming suffering, and from the desire of Jesus to enjoy the Paschal supper with his disciples once more, and for the last time in this world. The beginning, "with desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer," has something deep and heart-touching in it. Purely human, and subject to every feeling of love, desire, sorrow, the Saviour appears far remote from all stoical apathy. In entire conformity with the prescribed Jewish custom, Christ opened the meal with a prayer of thanksgiving, and then handed the cup. This cup is to be distinguished

from the cup given at the Holy supper, since the last was filled at the end of the meal; of those, that followed it, the gospel history says nothing. With the usual words with which this cup was handed, "take this and divide it" among yourselves, Luke joins the remark, "for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come." (Luke xxii. 18.) Jesus had already expressed the same thought in Luke xxii. 16, where he says, "I will not any more eat of the Passover, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

Now undoubtedly, as has been already stated in the consideration of the order of incidents at the last Supper, the strife between the disciples, as to who should be greatest in the kingdom of Heaven, occurred at this point of the feast, and led to the washing of the disciples feet. This took place after they had sat down to the meal, but still in the presence of Judas, so that the Saviour (which exalts his humility) washed the feet even of his betrayer. Hence this saying can here alone find place, since

after the expression of Jesus about the traitor, Judas withdrew. Nothing is said about the occasion of this strife. The common idea of its origin, namely, that the Apostles always expected the establishment of an earthly kingdom of Christ, and only contended about the highest places in it, cannot be easily defended. The remark of Jesus was not suited, if such motives were in the minds of the disciples, to destroy their false expectations, but was adapted to confirm the disciples therein, since Jesus promised them, that they should sit on twelve thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. In the parallel passage, (Matthew xx. 20,) which is suggested by an outward occurrence, in which the other disciples think they discover such a striving after temporal power among the children of Zebedee, there is nothing to justify the idea that Jesus occasioned such a strife ; moreover Jesus represents the surrender of one's own life, as the necessary expression of pure love. Besides, according to this view, the disciples must seem entirely without sensibility, if it were possible

for them, at so sacred a moment, to think more of themselves than of their Lord and Master. The idea is far more likely, that the strife arose about the places at table. — Each would wish to sit nearer the Lord, and in the struggle for these places, which was occasioned by love for their Master, reference might be made to a higher or lower place in the kingdom of Christ. These, as well as other remarks incidentally made, might induce Christ to inculcate upon his disciples humility and self-abasement, as the virtues peculiarly Christian.

The next passage, which comes before us according to our view of the course of events at the last Supper, is Christ's accusation of *the traitor*, which preceded his withdrawal. This very fitly and conformably follows the preceding promise to the faithful disciples ; joy in regard to this must have led the Saviour by contrast to dwell with grief upon that. Of the unsuitable position of Luke's statement of this incident, enough has been already said to show, that it could not have occurred at the end of the Holy Supper.

During the meal, Jesus was seized with sorrow at the thought, that one of his disciples was to betray him, (John xiii. 21.) He now intentionally expressed his thought; perhaps in the hope of softening the heart of the unfortunate Judas, through the power of sorrowing love, and in the opposite event, to induce his withdrawal, since he made known to him, that his dark design was discovered.

With the withdrawal of the representative of darkness, in the circle around the Lord, his love broke forth, like a long imprisoned stream, in the words, "Now is the Son of Man glorified," and the sublime passages which follow. (John xiii. 31.)

The last point in the account of the Saviour's last meal with his disciples, is the history of the *instituting of the Lord's Supper*, for which the exhortations of Jesus, immediately preceding, constitute the preparatory sermon, which was intended to lead the disciples to the most earnest self-examination. After Judas had retired, every thing necessary had been said, the Saviour

proceeded to the establishment of an ordinance, which he left to the eternal remembrance of his church, until his second coming. In the retired stillness of the little circle of his own, the Saviour performed a simple, unimposing act, which, however, was to become of interest to the history of the world. It is mournful, that this feast of love has been the occasion of the severest and most enduring controversies, which ecclesiastical and dogmatic history has to record. The simple words of ordaining the rite have led to the most manifold constructions. The expositor of Scripture entirely mistakes his office, if he allows himself to be drawn into a detail of the interpretations, that have been found necessary for the support of this or that party opinion. It is the business of dogmatic history to tell of these. The expositor ought rather merely to carry the reader back to the train of ideas, which the Lord must have had in uttering the words, and the disciples must have had in listening to them. But he must be therefore willing to state his own individual opinion in relation

to the prevailing one. It must not meanwhile be overlooked, that the opinion of the disciples at the establishment of the Lord's Supper cannot be considered as perfected. It is in the highest degree probable, that the idea, which the Saviour connected with it, was not then expressed to them. We find them indeed so undeveloped in all respects, before the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, that they first after that comprehended the full idea of the ordinance, while, at the same time, we have no reason to suppose, that Christ had connected with the establishment of the rite an explanation of its nature. This consideration is consoling, in as much, as we may infer from it, that the *degree of the correctness of our views* of the nature of the sacrament does not determine the *blessing* of its enjoyment, (supposing that the spiritual eye has not been *wilfully* closed to the right,) but the *purity of desire* for power and strength from above. Accordingly members of all denominations, who have different opinions of the Supper, may partake of its blessing, if they

only have Faith. But the expositor must not on this account, in order to place the reader in the train of ideas, which Jesus had, and which the Apostles had, after their illumination by the Holy Spirit, regarding the Holy Supper — he must not think himself freed from all considerations of *church customs, the authentic explanations of the nature of the Lord's Supper, and the general connexion of Christian doctrine.* — Else in this case, as well as the opposite, he will fall into error.

In the first place, as to what concerns the *usage of the Church*, this must be considered, because the question relates to a permanent ordinance. If an expositor would interpret the narrations of Matthew and Mark merely grammatically, it might be inferred, that Christ had merely wished to take leave of his disciples, by an action symbolical of his death, and had not thought of a repetition of this Supper. But the usage of the primitive church, which we must regard, as being founded by the Apostles, who were the authentic interpreters of our Lord's

meaning, shows just the contrary. And since the accounts of Luke and Paul contain the most decided command for the repetition of the Supper in the words of the ordinance, it is clear that Matthew and Mark must have regarded it as the church usage well known already to their readers.

In the *second* place, as to the *authentic explanations* of the nature of the ordinance, we may refer especially to 1 Cor. x. 16 – 22, and to xi. 23 – 29, and in one respect to John vi. In these passages a decidedly spiritual character is ascribed to the Supper, an examination is necessary before partaking, and either a blessing or curse is attached to it. On this account, the view of Zuinglius, that the supper is *merely* a commemorative meal, is excluded, because according to this it has no specific character.

Finally, as to the decision of the question, what peculiar sanctity lies in the elements at the Holy Supper, a reference is necessary to the connexion, in which this doctrine stands with the whole compass of Gospel doctrine, according to the principle of inter-

pretation by the analogy of faith. In regard to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, the biblical doctrine of the connexion of *flesh* and *spirit*, and of the glorification of the body, is peculiarly important. Wherever the biblical doctrine of the resurrection and the spiritual body, which the faithful have in it, is denied, and wherever spirit and body are separated by rigid Dualism, without any approximation being made, there must the peculiar characteristic of the supper be explained away into a general spiritual operation, which is equally realized in prayer. Thus the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation appears erroneous, according to the analogy of faith, since, as the Word, which became flesh, did not change the flesh into itself, or itself into the flesh, but, as in the case of the glorification of the body of Christ, both the human and Divine are firmly in it, so also is it in regard to the Lord's Supper. According to what has been said, I hold Luther's opinion of the Holy Supper, as that, which entirely coincides in all essential points with the usage of the church, as well as with

the authentic explanations of the original words of the ordinance, and with the connexion with Christian doctrine.

According to my conviction, the Scripture teaches, that, in the Lord's Supper, the Saviour, who sits with his glorified humanity at the right hand of God, communicates to the faithful even *his glorified corporeal nature* — that corporeal nature, which cannot be separated from his spiritual and Divine being — which, as Ignatius says, is a medicine of immortal efficacy, a germ of new life for the wakening body of the faithful believer. My opinion, however, differs from Luther's, in the first place, because I do not conceive it implied in the idea of the Lord's Supper, that *all*, who partake of it, receive the body of their Lord. Although the body may be partaken, it is still not to be taken with the mouth, since it is a spiritual body. Where, therefore, the organs of the spiritual body are wanting, the mouth of faith, wherever, above all, no new spiritual man has been born by baptism, who is to be spiritually nurtured, there the body of the Lord can-

not be enjoyed. I differ from Luther, secondly, in thinking that not the whole Christ, he who was slain on the cross, is enjoyed in the Supper, but an *influence* from him, and from the *glorified body* of the Saviour. As long as the Lord was upon earth, his body was being glorified, but the process was not completed. It still lay under the possibility of death ; but after the resurrection, death was impossible. The opinion, that the *whole* Christ is present in the Supper, leads to the doctrine of the Omnipresence of the body of Christ, and of the right hand of God, which in the manner, in which Luther represents it, is not biblical. The truth in this idea is only this — that our Lord, after the union of the human with the Divine, works everywhere with his humanity. As the sun above sends forth his beams all around, so the Saviour breathes forth a vivifying influence from himself, which, alike human and Divine, has power to glorify men in spirit, body, and soul, and which is taken in, wherever the organs for it are ready. — Every operation of Christ has the power to

produce him wholly in the heart, as the spark can produce the flame, from which itself arose. As according to this, the Divine and human nature in the person of the Saviour are not confounded, although inseparably united, so in the Lord's Supper, the power of Christ is joined with the bread and wine, without one's taking away or even changing the nature of the other.

If we now consider the several passages, relating to the Lord's Supper, it is plain, that the passage in the first of Corinthians, eleventh chapter, twenty-third and following verses, is to be regarded as most important. Since not only do Matthew and Mark say very little of the subject, implying, as they do, a knowledge of church usage in the case, while in John, the history of the establishment of the Supper is entirely wanting, for in his sixth chapter he merely refers to it, but Luke also disappoints us, and above all Paul declares, that he had received directly from the Lord instructions even for the church practice concerning this sacrament. We may therefore say, that if the

Saviour in this passage of Corinthians gives an explanation of his purpose in the institution of the Supper, this passage should not be disregarded in the interpretation of the Synopsists.

As to the *form* of this rite, it has already been remarked, that the breaking of bread, and the passing of several cups and singing of Psalms were usual at the Paschal feast. Our Lord gave a deeper meaning to this custom, since he represented the breaking of bread and giving the wine, as the emblems of his sacrificial death on the cross. According to the doctrine of Transubstantiation, the supper is regarded as almost an actual repetition of the sacrifice,—an opinion, which, the practice of the primitive church, as well as the harmony of Scripture faith, utterly contradicts. The rite only represents figuratively the one sacrifice, by which *he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified*.

The *essence* of the Lord's Supper lies in the word accompanying the outward rite, which as the Word of the Lord is Spirit and Life. It is especially important to observe

the expression, given only by Matthew and Mark ; " take, eat, drink." In these words, the receptivity is expressed as the part of the disciples, who represent the communicants. Christ is the dispenser, assuaging spiritual hunger and thirst with himself ; the Church is nourished by him. From this connection it follows, that the Lord himself could not have partaken the bread and wine. It is not a parting meal, that is here spoken of, in which all partake the same food together, in token of their union, but a process of nourishing, as of a child from its mother's breast, in which there can be no reciprocity. When Christ speaks of the bread and wine, as his body and blood, we are to understand him, not only as calling the bread and wine the emblems of his death, but as the means of imparting his spiritual, or glorified body, to the faithful ones around the sacramental table.

According to this explanation of what is meant by the body of Christ, a question arises, how could Jesus, in founding the Holy Supper, speak of his glorified

body, while he, as yet, had only a mortal body. The expression in Luke and Paul, *the body given and the blood shed for you*, seems to favor the idea, that it was not the glorified, but the natural, suffering, crucified body, which the Lord would communicate. But the most zealous defenders of this view will yet allow, that the Lord's body imparted the powers of eternal life, and could not, therefore, be like the perishable, sinful bodies of men. The opinion, that it was the Lord's crucified body, is important to them only so far as they are opposed to the idea of an ethereal, imaginary body, such as the Docetæ asserted, and would maintain the real existence of the body of Christ. And there is entire truth in this view; but this truth may be so expressed, as to maintain the reality and identity of the Lord's body, both before and after the resurrection, against all Docetic errors, and also to distinguish between the *glorified* and *not glorified* body of Christ. The communion of our Lord's flesh and blood could naturally proceed only from the former. But, if we suppose the

glorification of the Lord's body to have been gradually going on, then the efficacy of it, before the return from the dead, will be no more surprising, than that the Saviour should impart his spirit by a breath, although the Holy Spirit was poured out at a later period, on the day of Pentecost. In the mortal body, the immortal already rested, just as in the regenerate person the new man lives, although still veiled in the old. The resurrection was but as the freeing of the butterfly from the chrysalis, in which it had already long been formed.

We now, for a moment, consider the expression, *blood of the new covenant*, which is found in Matthew and Mark, and to which, in Luke and Paul, the words, *the new covenant in my blood*, correspond. Both phrases are essentially the same. Both regard the peculiar relation of the blood of the Saviour to the new covenant. Is it asked, wherein consists this peculiar relation? Evidently in the remission of sins, since without shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness. In the New Testament, under the divine for-

bearance, sin is no longer remembered, as under the economy of the Old Testament, but through the atonement of Christ, which his devoted death completed, sin was blotted out, while he bore the curse for us. Both the above expressions may be employed to denote the new relation between God and man, that was founded on the shedding of Christ's blood. The view, that our Lord represents his death, as a covenant offering, (as stated by Dr. Paulus,) and not as a sin-offering, is sufficiently contradicted by the decided expression, *shed for the remission of sins*. Luke and Paul have only the decided command, "this do in remembrance of me." The First Epistle to the Corinthians, xi. 26, fixes the manner of celebration, and the period of its continuance. The former should have especial reference to the death, as the act in which the reconciling power of the Great High Priest is concentrated; the latter was to extend to his appearing. The feast of the Holy Supper was to repeat symbolically the great act, that Golgotha, which completed the world's atonement, and was thus

to preach to the world, that the atonement for it had been made ; just as every sacrifice under the Old Testament, preached that Adam had fallen, and a renewal of human nature was necessary. While such a sacrifice only awakes a longing for forgiveness of sin, the Holy Supper nourishes the soul with the living bread, which came down from Heaven to give life to the world. He only that is born of the body can partake of material food ; so he only, who is born of the spirit can enjoy the spiritual banquet. The Lord's Supper presupposes baptism as necessary, but does not confound it with the Lord's Supper. As the act of birth is but once, while partaking of food may be many times repeated, so baptism is to be performed but once, while the Lord's Supper must be often celebrated. This view may seem to be opposed by the fact, that the Supper appears to have been instituted before the rite of baptism, and before our Lord's glorification. But when it is remembered, that baptism had been previously practised by John the Baptist and the Apostles, and that

Matthew, (xxviii. 18,) when he speaks of its being established by our Lord, refers to its establishment, as a permanent, universal custom for all nations, the difficulty disappears. Had Jesus established the Supper after his resurrection, as the Glorified One, this would have led to the error of the Docetæ concerning the rite. The closer at hand this error appeared to be, the more carefully must all means be taken to destroy it, as the history of the first century shows.

The object of this representation of the death of Christ, for the sins of the world, in the form of the sacred supper, can have a signification only as long as our Lord is separate from his church. Upon his return in glory, the feast must be framed anew and differently. The conclusion of our Lord's address, according to Matthew and Mark, signifies this, wherein he declares, "that he will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until he drink it new with them in his Father's kingdom." From these words it may be supposed to follow, that the Lord himself partook of the sacramental supper.

But the words "my body," "my blood," oppose this view very strongly. The most simple thought is, that the expression, "drink again of the fruit of the vine," refers to the earlier partaking of the wine-cups, of which our Lord drank. Luke xxii. 16, particularly refers to this, where the Paschal lamb is spoken of. Here it is plain, that the remark is made, not of the bread in the supper, but of the Passover, so that the sense is this, "in the kingdom of God, I will again celebrate the Passover with you." In regard to this idea, the custom has been according to the prevailing idealism, ashamed of the resurrection and glorification of the flesh, to recognise merely a general expression of joy: "There will we enjoy one another, more intimately and spiritually than here." They, who adopt this signification, should, however, be frank enough to acknowledge, that the expressions selected must be very liable to be mistaken. Especially for those, who, as is said of the disciples, held low materialist ideas of the Messiah. They abide more by the gram-

matical truth, who think, that the Jewish idea of a feast shines forth, which is to take place in the Messiah's kingdom, where even the physical world is to be glorified. But it is more conformable to Scripture doctrine to say, that this idea of the supper of the Lamb, (feast of the marriage of the Lamb, Revelations xix. 9,) has its inner truth. Every fear on the ground of materialism is set aside sufficiently by the consideration, that in the world of glory, everything is glorified, and accordingly the idea of a social feast with the Lord, in the world of resurrection, will also be regarded as glorified. So regarded, this thought closes the supper most happily. For in these last words, the Lord, passing over the time of the gradual development of the kingdom of God through severe struggles, which grows up like a grain of mustard seed, until it fill the world, — reaching over this time, the Lord transports himself with his own into that perfect harmony of existence, in which the outward creation seems to respond to the inner spirit, and Paradise is restored. In this

prospect, then, there is the best consolation for Jesus and his disciples at the coming hours of sorrow.

SECTION II.

AGONY OF JESUS IN GETHSEMANE, AND
ARREST.

(Matt. xxvi. 36-56; Mark xiv. 32-52; Luke xxii. 40-53; John xviii. 1-11.)

At the end of the Supper, to which, as has been already remarked, the discourses, recorded by John, succeeded, and which were doubtless, uttered in the supper room, the Saviour hastens forth, together with his disciples, from the city, from which the grace of his presence had already departed. Jesus went over the brook Kidron to the Mount of Olives. The brook flows between the city and the Mount of Olives, and empties into the Dead Sea. Here, or on the Mount of Olives, was a place with a garden, which Jesus had frequented with his disciples, and which was well known to Judas. To this the Lord went. Hardly had he arrived, when he withdrew into the garden,

in deep solitude. The other disciples may have remained in the house of the friendly owner ; only three, — that trusty three, who were present at the Transfiguration, — followed him, and beheld the mighty agony of his soul, and could, therefore, measure the depth of the Lord's life, as they had measured its height.

We have now arrived at the moment, which we may consider, as the beginning of the sufferings of Christ, in the strict sense of the word, and it is proper to rest a moment from the consideration of details, and take a general survey of the development of the Saviour's life. It seems less wonderful to us, that suffering without measure now came upon the Holy One of God, since the noblest of the human race have been led through seasons of great need and severe struggle, and at the last, the sufferings of Jesus, which had long invisibly pressed upon him, merely took a visible shape. The contemplation of the sins of the world, the experience of the unbelief, the heartlessness, the unreasonableness of men, was a deep grief to the

heart of the Son of God, long before those last moments of his earthly pilgrimage, in which his suffering reached its extreme degree. But, it appears surprising to the observer, that the Saviour did not stand unmoved amid such sorrows, like a rock amid the storm, and that on the contrary, he feared, lamented, and besought his Heavenly Father for deliverance from the hour of anguish. If we compare the conduct of Jesus with that of previous sages, Socrates, for instance, or noble martyrs like Huss, Polycarp, and others, more firmness and courage seem to have been manifested by these, than we discover in Christ. In order to understand this circumstance, the following considerations are necessary.

In the first place, it is not to be overlooked, that the Gospel discloses an idea of life, according to which stoical equanimity, severity, and rigidity, in respect to sorrow and pain, do not appear as the highest excellence: it honors and much more carefully cherishes the tender sentiments of pity, compassion, sorrowfulness, and is not ashamed

ed of tears and the true, simple expression of anguish. Meanwhile, it is to be especially observed, that our Lord manifests no anguish before the rough populace, who would have misunderstood his expressions of grief, but only in presence of his own trusty friends. The former would have been unsuitable, but not the latter.

In the next place, the anguish of Jesus is not to be regarded as a shrinking from visible enemies and from physical pain ; * his agony was invisible, spiritual suffering, a despondency of soul, a struggle against the power of darkness. As in the beginning of his ministry, the Saviour was tempted by the enemy on the side of *desire*, now at the end, he was tempted on the side of *fear*.

Finally, we must consider, that the suf-

* The opinion, that the coming corporeal sufferings of Jesus brought on his agony, disturbs if it does not entirely destroy the whole meaning of his appearance. In this case, Christ would fall behind, not only many martyrs in strength of soul, but even many irreligious and immoral men, who have endured far more terrible martyrdom, without shrinking.

fering of Jesus was not merely something, which belonged to the development of his own individual life, but that it stands in connection with the development of mankind, in general. Christ suffered as the representative of collective humanity; he bore their guilt, so that his sufferings have a character, specific, and to be compared with no other.

Yet, not only is the anguish attributed to our Lord in the narration very surprising, but also the wavering in the inward disposition of Jesus. If we compare the firm faith and victorious courage, which are expressed in the high-priestly prayer, (John xvii.) it is very striking, that, a few hours after, the Saviour can appear in such inward agony, as the passages before us represent him. On this account, we may readily see why Bretschneider, and other commentators, should question the correctness of the narration. But a stricter examination of the claims of the passages to our faith, and a higher view of the spiritual nature, will lead us to believe the narration, and even to see in it

strong confirmation of the truth of the events recorded.

The case is easily settled, if we can give some ground, upon which so sudden a wavering in the life of Jesus can be explained. Such a ground is afforded us by the phenomenon, which presents itself often in the lives of men of faith, (Paul, for instance, 2 Corinthians, xii.) and which may, at least, serve for an analogy, that a sudden withdrawal of the higher powers of the spirit ensues, which determine the state of the mind. The evangelist expressly states, that such an abandonment took place on the cross. In the history of the temptation, we find ourselves compelled to presuppose it; and nothing is plainer, than that we must adopt something similar here. The magnitude of the struggle of Jesus, on the one hand, as of his victory on the other hand, receives its full signification from such a supposition. While a Socrates could conquer, only while in full possession of his spiritual strength, the Saviour conquered the whole might of darkness, even when the tide of spiritual

influence was low, and he was deserted by the signal aid, that had before been his support.

The avowal of his sorrow, and the weeping entreaty to his disciples, to strengthen him by their presence and watching, forms a wonderfully touching contrast with the destiny of Jesus, and the object of his sufferings. He, the helper of the whole world, confesses to them, to whom he brought aid, his own need of aid, and sought from them the help, which they could not afford. For prayer, Jesus withdraws a little from his disciples, and falls on his face upon the earth. In this prayer of the Redeemer, there is something striking in the entreaty, grounded on the power of the Almighty, to deliver him from the hour of anguish. Here, in conjunction with the certain knowledge of the Father's will, a wish seems to be expressed in the Son, to depart from the will of the Father. But, in the first place, this prayer is not to be considered apart from the qualification ; "but not as I will, but as thou wilt." In the first entreaty, only the *weak-*

ness of the flesh is manifested, which the Saviour must share, or else his sufferings be only apparent and illusive; in the second entreaty, lies the expression of the conquering spirit. In the next place, it must not be overlooked, that the wish to be delivered from death and its pathway of pain, was not a sinful, but rather a pure, innocent, holy wish. Since death is the wages of sin, and as such, bitter to the sinful creature, for whom, however, it is called in a certain respect, a deliverance from want and sorrow, how much more must it raise a shudder in the pure, spotless soul of Jesus! It would have betrayed a false fakir-like insensibility, if the Redeemer had gone forward to his death, without expressing, from his very life and marrow, the shudder of his holy human soul, before the dark vale of the grave. Far from marring his holy image, this feature is even necessary to its perfection. A higher necessity now requires the overcoming of a feeling in itself entirely true. No compulsory will of the Father forced the Son to his bitter death, since the god-like will of

the Son was one with the Father's ; but the conflict of absolute justice with mercy, in a word, the mystery of the work of human salvation demanded a satisfactory offering ; and the voluntary entrance into this high necessity, which could not be without a severe struggle against human feeling, is found marked at this exalted, sacred moment. Upon the victory in Gethsemane, all was truly perfected, the will of the Father was taken into the very soul of Jesus, and as in a human struggle the mind is again at peace, when the determination is irrevocably made, we now find it to be so at this point in the Saviour's life.

After this victory over the assault of darkness, Jesus returns to his three disciples and finds them, notwithstanding his exhortation, sleeping. Addressing Peter, as the speaker among them, he called them again to watching and prayer, with the advice, that both lessened temptation. The connexion of ideas in this passage, is evidently this : —
“ Giving way to sorrow and its results presses back the ruling power of the spirit, and

facilitates the way for the victory of the besetting sin; struggling against the overwhelming feeling, and prayer, which, gives men a new power from the spiritual world, are security against temptation." Hence Christ remarks upon the weakness of human nature, which hinders the performance of what the nobler man chooses.

For the second and for the third time, the Saviour goes to prayer, and upon his return again finds his disciples, beset, and entirely overcome by the power of darkness, sleeping. These three attacks by fear stand parallel to the three steps in the history of the temptation. Luke alone speaks of the angel strengthening the sufferer. We may class this passage among those, in which the word angel is not to be understood as denoting any outward appearance or person: it appeared only to Christ, and probably merely to his spirit within. By the "strengthening" of the angel, we are only to understand the influence of spiritual powers, which was extended to the Saviour, struggling in the extremity of abandonment. As a physical

expression of the dreadful struggle of the Saviour, Luke speaks of "*Sweat, as if it were drops of blood.*" Although according to medical statements, a bloody sweat may occur at the highest stage of anguish of soul, we must yet acknowledge, that in the words of Luke, no such thing is expressly declared, but a comparison of the sweat to drops of blood.

In Matthew xxvi. 47, and following verses, the act of the arrest of Christ is narrated. After Jesus had gone through the hard struggle, tranquillity was restored to him, so that before Judas, and the band who accompanied him, he appeared in striking majesty. Uncertain, whether the disciples of Christ would defend him, the priests had not only taken some of the temple guards with them, but also a detachment of Roman soldiers. The soldiers had not only provided themselves with weapons, but also with torches and lanterns. Since it must (on account of the Passover) necessarily have been moonlight, these torches were provided, in case that the sky should be overcast, or that Je-

sus should conceal himself in the house or the garden. According to Matthew and Mark, Judas, who led the company, had agreed upon a sign, by which he would point out the person of Jesus; he was to kiss him. The words of Christ refer to the contrast, between the expression of love and friendship, and the sign of the base treachery of Judas: (Luke xxii. 48,) *Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?* John (xviii. 4, and the following verses,) gives us some more satisfactory account of what took place, on the approach of Judas with his band. The Lord, clearly aware of the signification of that moment, went to meet them, asked them whom they sought, and gave himself up to them, saying, "*I am he.*" Here John (xviii. 6,) states, that they started back, and fell upon the ground. We need not suppose a miracle in order to explain this circumstance; but the person of Jesus himself is the miracle, and the majesty, which shone forth from it, could easily produce a most powerful effect upon men, who probably had known of him, or heard him.

We find similar events in the life of men, before whom, as in the case of Marius, mere rough, physical force stood awed in subjection. The account in Matthew of the kiss of Judas harmonizes, as Lücke has remarked, very plainly with John's account, if we consider that Judas approached alone in advance of the others. When the Lord saw him, and Judas had kissed him, he went to meet the approaching band, in order to protect the disciples, and on this occasion, the armed men fell down, overcome by the power of his spirit.

The attempt of one disciple to defend himself with the sword, spoken of in Luke, is so fully described, that he mentions the name of Peter as that disciple, (from whom indeed such rashness might be expected,) and also the name of the servant of the high priest, Malchus. John, in whose house Malchus was known, would readily give this information. (John xviii. 15.) According to John xviii. 26, he was acquainted with the relatives of this Malchus. John and Luke remark, that it was the right ear that was

cut off, but only Luke speaks of the sudden healing of the wound. This circumstance best explains the fact of Peter's being able to escape with impunity; astonishment at the cure would of course engross all the attention of the hostile band. According to John xviii. 11, our Lord, besides bidding Peter put the sword in the scabbard, adds the significant words, "The cup, which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Matthew gives the saying in more copious form. The incongruity of a long speech being made to Peter under these imminent circumstances, is done away, by the consideration, that the words were spoken during the cure. All attention was directed to it, and this enabled Jesus to give Peter the necessary direction.

In the first place, as regards the words of Jesus, "*they who take the sword shall perish with the sword,*" they refer without doubt to Peter, according to Genesis ix. 6. Violent self-defence, against the ordinances of magistrates, is likened to murder. Parallel with this remark, "*Suffer ye thus far,*"

is to be considered ; which has been supposed to refer to the hostile company, in the sense, "allow me time," until I cure the ear of Malchus. The words have a more significant reference to the disciples, "desist, thus far and no farther."

In the next place the idea of the twelve legions of angels is very remarkable. The number twelve may have been selected in reference to the number of disciples, and the word "legion" refers evidently to the "heavenly host ;" so that in general the idea is, "Do you think that I need earthly aid from you, feeble ones ! while the heavenly aid of the hosts of God is at my command ?"

According to Luke xxii. 53, the significant expression here comes in, "*This is your hour and the power of darkness.*" The interpretation of Kuinoel — "This is the hour given you by God, for the execution of your plans, and the power of your sins" — is without doubt correct in the first part, but as to the second part, the expression, "power of darkness," does not apply to the sins

of the multitude. "Darkness" does not denote sins in this or that individual, for this is called "sin," "*amartia*," but denotes the element of sin in general, the opposite of light. At the moment in which the Holy One of God was led to the cross, by the sins of men, the power of evil had attained its highest point; on reaching the cross, its power was destroyed, and its nothingness revealed, while the death of the righteous expiated the sins of the world.

According to the prediction of the Lord, the disciples now dispersed. Mark (xiv. 51,) speaks of a young man lightly clad, who was seized upon, but who fled and left his linen garment behind him. It is in my mind most likely, that Mark here speaks of himself.

SECTION III.

**EXAMINATION OF JESUS BEFORE CAIAPHAS
AND THE SANHEDRIM. — PETER'S DE-
NIAL.**

(Matt. xxvi. 57-75; Mark xiv. 53-72; Luke xxi.
54-71; John xviii. 12-27.)

THE correct consideration of the scenes, which now present themselves to our eyes, requires a representation of the modes of administering justice among the Jews, at the time of Christ. It has already been remarked, that the Jews had lesser courts (called lesser Sanhedrim) in all their important cities; in all the cities, (as the Talmud states,) which contained over one hundred and twenty inhabitants. In Jerusalem, there were two of these. But the highest jurisdiction belonged to the great Sanhedrim of Jerusalem, which was composed of seventy-one

persons. The origin of this tribunal has been derived from Moses, who appointed the seventy elders, who with him constituted an assembly of seventy-one. The name of "Sanhedrim," being derived from the Greek, of course was given to the assembly at a much later period. Perhaps Ezra founded this tribunal, although its name arose first under the Græco-Syrian Dynasty. The constitution of the court was as follows: The officiating high priest was the president for the time being. They, who had formerly been high priests, and the twenty-four principals of the classes of priests, and other considerable men, learned in the law, were members. They had a particular place for their meetings, although in affairs of emergency, they assembled at the house of the high priest, as was the case at the examination of Jesus. All important cases, especially all spiritual affairs, belonged to the cognizance of this supreme tribunal. Since they looked upon Jesus, as a false Messiah, they naturally brought his case before this tribunal. Had not their malice intended to

put Christ to death, they might here have ended the process against him. For only forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem, and only three years before our Lord's death, the Romans took away from the Sanhedrim the jurisdiction over life and death, and on this account the delivering of the judgment was committed to Pilate. It is remarkable, that Christ was not led by the guard, to the officiating high priest, Caiaphas, but to his father-in-law, Annas. The latter had been formerly high priest, but, according to Josephus, was removed in the reign of Tiberius by the Procurator, Valerius Gratus. In his place Ismael was appointed, then Eleazar, the son of Annas, then Simon, the son of Camitlfus, and finally, in the year twenty-six, Joseph or Caiaphas, the son-in-law of Annas. In all probability, this Annas, as formerly high priest, and father-in-law of two others, was a person of great consequence. Perhaps he was the substitute to supply the place of the officiating high priest, in cases of need, and on that account, the most difficult questions would

first be subjected to his decision. Perhaps the palace of Annas was so situated, that the guard reached it first with their captive. He seems to have been kept here a long while, until the Sanhedrim was assembled at the house of Caiaphas, the son-in-law of Annas. This opinion seems the more credible, as it is still uncertain, whether Annas wore this dignity; and since, moreover, no proper trial took place before him, it may be supposed, that he allowed them to bring Jesus before him, rather to gratify his curiosity, and only cursorily directed some questions to him. But John refers, as he names the name of Caiaphas, to the early part of his narrative, where he first advised that one should be put to death for all, as an indication how this trial would terminate.

The most difficult subject in this section is in harmonizing the four Evangelists. While John expressly states that Jesus was first led to Annas, and mentions subsequently the sending to Caiaphas, the Synopsists speak only of the trial before Caiaphas. Here they place the scene of Peter's denial, while ac-

according to John, it remains doubtful, whether this took place in the palace of Annas or Caiaphas, since he makes mention of this occurrence both before and after the sending of Christ to Caiaphas. Formerly it has been attempted to remove this difficulty, by very violent means — by placing verse 24 (John xviii.) after the first clause of verse 13. It would be easier to consider the word “sent,” in the twenty-fourth verse, as in the pluperfect tense, and the verse would read, “Now Annas *had* sent him bound unto Caiaphas.” According to this translation, all that is told of the questioning and denial of Peter would be placed in the palace of Caiaphas. This interpretation has been adopted by Tholuck, and presents no insurmountable difficulty, grammatically considered. But if this view be right, we must think that John has written very negligently. Read John’s gospel by itself, and it would seem clearly as if he meant to state, that an examination had taken place before Annas, and also, that Peter had been in his palace. Without the Synopsists, no one could understand the narra-

tion otherwise. I think with Grotius and others, that John wished to correct, and complete the accounts of the Synopsists, and therefore brought the transactions, that took place before Annas, into distinct notice. The idea, that John was in error, cannot be entertained for a moment, because he was an eye-witness, and moreover narrates so circumstantially in this part of the history, as to state the relations of the servant of the high priest. What is said of the examination by the high priest, (John xviii. 19—23,) bears no resemblance with that held before Caiaphas, and cannot therefore be identified with it. Hence comes it, that the Synopsists, who were not present at the scene, and therefore derived their information from others, might have judged wrongly of the place, since both Annas and Caiaphas were high priests. When they heard, that this or that event took place before the high priest, they would of course think only of Caiaphas, the officiating priest, and would refer everything to him. John mildly corrects this mistake, but entirely passes over

what had been expressly and sufficiently related by the others—the distinct examination before Caiaphas.

According to our view, the whole order of incidents was this. When the guard first brought Jesus to the city, they led him to the house of Annas, which was nearest at hand; partly in order that he might be kept here until the Sanhedrim should assemble, partly because Annas wished to see him, and speak with him. He then opened a conversation with Christ; in consequence of the reply, a servant struck the Saviour; and while Annas, who had satisfied his curiosity, and seen that nothing could be drawn from his replies, withdrew; the coarse crowd exercised their indignities on the sacred person of Christ. Peter, under the protection of John, had pressed into the front court yard, but denied knowing the Lord, when he was urged to say if he knew him. One of these denials took place, at the moment in which Jesus was led away to Caiaphas: and therefore Jesus could look upon him with that look, so full of meaning. Arrived before

Pilate, the Saviour immediately enters upon his trial, and the sentence, and the leading away to Pilate, succeeded. Here therefore was no probable moment, in which the barbarous mal-treatment of Jesus could have taken place. According to Matthew and Mark, it would seem, as if this had taken place before the Sanhedrim.) But it is utterly incompatible with the dignity of this, the highest assembly of the country, that such outrages should be committed in its presence. Luke introduces the whole trial only supplementarily, and therefore his statement is of no importance to this point. But how compatible all seems, if we consider the indignity, which a servant was permitted to offer in presence of Annas, as a signal, which drew forth farther expressions of insult, after the withdrawal of Annas. Left alone with the prisoner, the common crowd of soldiers and temple guards might think they could insult him, although such a large company of guards did not go with him all the way to Pilate. The only thing that goes against this view is, that John, accord-

ing to universal opinion, was acquainted with Caiaphas, but not with Annas. But if we consider both high priests as so nearly related, it is evident, that in the acquaintance of one, the acquaintance of the other is implied. As to the use of the term high priest, (*archiereus*,) it is notorious, that the same term can be as well applied to those, who had formerly held the office, as to the officiating incumbent.

According to the order above stated, we now, in the first place, consider the denial of Peter and the examination of the Lord before Annas. The two events (John xviii. 15 – 18, 24 – 27) are here connected. Masses of soldiers and guards, together with the servants of the high priest, fill the front court yard. In a hall, which opened into the court yard, Annas probably conversed with the Saviour, while Peter was questioned, and as they led Christ to Caiaphas, the question was repeated. As regards "*the other disciple*," (verse 15,) there is no doubt, that John means himself. As to particulars of Peter's denial, John again departs

from the other Evangelists : since these mention three instances of denial, while he mentions but two. It may readily be said, that John distinguishes two points in the second denial of Peter, (xxv. 26 ;) first several asked him, "*Art thou not one of his disciples ?*" and then another servant spoke alone. Still a perfect coincidence is not made out in this way ; since, according to Matthew and Mark, the second question, as well as the first, comes from a damsel. Besides, Luke does not agree with Matthew and Mark, since Luke speaks of a servant, where they speak of a damsel ; and where they speak of all the bystanders, there he mentions another individual servant. The trouble of removing such trifling contradictions is not worth taking ; they may be received as they are given. They are a surety for the independence of the Gospel Histories, and therefore they promote the objects of the Scriptures. Yet evidently, on account of the previous prophesy of Jesus, (Matt. xxvi. 75,) the triple denial of Peter actually took place. John does not apparently intend to

make a full narration, but only to state the locality correctly. The triple question of our Lord to Peter (John xxi.) refers back to Peter's triple denial.

The palace of the high priest was, without doubt, a large, splendid building. It contained a court which the watch occupied, who had probably kindled a fire on account of the coldness of the night. This court lay lower than the main building, which was probably entered through a stair-case; a colonnade extended hence to the street; through this colonnade, which it was usual to build with a covered roof, the passage led to the court; here a damsel was placed as a door-keeper. This door-keeper seems to have known Peter in the court yard, who had first fled with the other disciples, but who soon followed Jesus at a distance, and was led on by John. She probably knew him by his mien, and the look of dismay, which he must have very strongly expressed, since he made such a general impression. He had followed his Lord, to see where the affair would terminate, and he evidently expected

the worst. The door keeper looked him sharply in the face, and inquired about his connexion with the Nazarene. Here Peter denied. Meanwhile, in order to remove himself from this dangerous place, he hastened into the porch, in which was the door which led to the street; here the other damsel asked him, and the weak disciple, with an oath, again denied. This new question prevented Peter's leaving the court yard; he approached the blazing fire, and seated himself with affected confidence, among the servants of the temple, who were keeping watch, (John xviii. 18 - 25.) Peter remained here quiet and unobserved, an hour longer, (Luke xxii. 59.) This probably emboldened him to ask questions about Jesus, and now they all recognised him for a Galilean, by his speech. Besides, a kinsman of Malchus, whose ear Peter had cut off, and who himself had been at the capture of Jesus, declared that he knew Peter. Again Peter denied his Lord. The cock crew. This predicted sign called to the disciple's mind the warning words of Christ, and repent-

ance gained dominion over him. Luke remarks, that the Lord turned, and his look pierced the heart of Peter. All this accords with John, according to whom Jesus was led to Caiaphas, when Peter's last denial took place. He must therefore have passed through the court and the perch, so that he could see the disciple. On the withdrawal of his Master, Peter hastened away, and wept bitterly.

In this history of Peter, this first important figure, which represents all the weak and fearful among believers, meets us in the rich picture, which the Lord's Passion unfolds before us. The most energetic, the most zealous among the disciples, appears thus weak, thus wretched; the spirit was willing, the flesh was weak. Touching indeed is the artless simplicity, with which the Evangelists relate this deep downfall of the chief among them. They do not soften down the disgrace, they frankly say, that a damsel asked him. But as they do not defend him, so they do not reproach nor wonder at him; without comment, they state

the bare fact. But we need not now forbear reflection, and must ask ourselves the question, how was it that Peter, that strong-willed disciple, whose fall Christ had so expressly predicted, so distinctly denied his Lord, even while no danger threatened him? The denial would be conceivable, if death had stood before his eyes; but there was nothing said of the followers of Christ, during the investigation, and Peter was terrified at the question of a simple maiden. A psychological enigma seems to be attached to the outward consideration of these circumstances. But if we press on into the inner depths of the scene, it will be found, that some inner causes may be recognised, as explaining the conduct of Peter, as was the case in respect to the agony of Jesus in Gethsemane. It was the hour of the power of darkness, which in so inconceivable a manner lamed and covered over the spiritual powers of the disciple, so that he could not only deny Jesus, but was even yet in danger, after that he had once denied him. A temptation, more than merely human,

overcame Peter, and one which was necessary to cure him of his self-sufficient pride, as also to make him a mirror for others; a temptation, which our Lord teaches us to pray to be delivered from, and which Peter might have escaped, if he had before humbled himself at the word of his Lord. Thus the Lord made use of the most various means to lead his disciples to perfection of spiritual life; as this *fall* served for the salvation of Peter, so did his *preservation* keep the others from the same. As the fall led the proud Peter to humility, so must preservation, in the danger in which Peter lay, fix the other disciples immovably in faith in the grace of their Lord.

We now come to the conversation of Annas with Christ, (John xviii. 19–23.) This was plainly a manifestation of mere curiosity, rather than a formal trial. As subsequently Herod, so now the high priest wished to see the wonderful man, and learn something surprising of him. Hence the form of Christ's reply. [This would not have been proper in a regular judicial trial;

the accused is not only bound to submit to the examination of a magistrate, if he be justly accused, but even if he be accused wrongfully. We observe this deference to the magistracy always most tenderly observed by our Lord ; he replied duly even to wrongful and malicious judges ; or where all defence was in vain, he was silent. But here was no judicial procedure, and since Annas was no longer high priest, the Lord could therefore fitly reprove his equally obtrusive and malicious curiosity. The conduct of Christ at the barbarous insult of the servant is remarkable. We have in this an authentic interpretation of the command in Matthew v. 38. As has already been remarked, it would have been soliciting abuse, if the Saviour had not here claimed justice, since the insult was given in the presence of the master of the servant, who was bound to rebuke it himself. But later, when he was abandoned, the lonely prey to rude violence, nothing remained to the Saviour, but the weapons of silence, since an appeal to justice, addressed to insolence, is only a fresh

provocation. This one deed of violence (probably after Annas had withdrawn) was a warrant for many more. It is wonderful, that the spirit of prophesy did not hold it beneath its dignity to predict these outrages in detail, and to indicate the state of soul, which the Holy One of God would present to the profane multitude. "The Lord God will help me," says the Messiah in Isaiah; "therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and know that I shall not be ashamed." Here is immovable faith in the eternal love of God, expressed even in the deepest abandonment. And the prophet has also painted in another place the unutterable gentleness and patient resignation, which could be provoked by no indignity in the words, "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb; so he openeth not his mouth." To estimate the grandeur of this conduct, we must always bear in mind, that the insulted one was the Eternal Word of the Father,

that he became flesh, and endured all this for our sakes.

After the account of the leading the Lord away to Caiaphas, follows the formal trial before the Sanhedrim. According to Luke, the Sanhedrim was assembled, as soon as it was day. Matthew and Mark place the passing of sentence, and John places the leading away to Pilate, first in the morning. But it should be considered, that, as the first dawn of day may be called morning, there is no necessary disagreement between the several statements. Beside, the calling together the Sanhedrim must have taken considerable time, so that the greatest part of the night must be thereby spent. As regards the place of this important deliberation, the investigation of the case of Christ came regularly before this tribunal. It had not only permission to prove, according to the word of God, all pretensions to the authority of prophets and the Messiah, but an express obligation to do it. But they were extremely false in arresting Jesus, since by their questions they showed they had the

clearest information of his dignity as Messiah, and, even against their better knowledge, sought false witnesses against the Holy One of God. Evidently they had already provided false witnesses against him, because these could not well have been procured in the night. In this, ill-will was evidently manifested towards Christ, and he therefore determined to be silent toward their accusations ; on their continuing to question him, he first replies to his unjust judges, faithful to the duty of a subject. Now more false witnesses against Jesus came in, but their testimony was unlike, and they contradicted each other in their allegations. But finally two false witnesses came forward, who cited the saying of Christ, in regard to the destruction of the temple, in proof of his guilt. These persons indeed cited the remark, which Christ had actually made, but they wished to deduce a false idea from it, and they were therefore false witnesses.

While Caiaphas, who presided over the assembly, saw that nothing was to be gained in this way, he sought to remove the voice-

less, yet eloquent testimony of Christ, against the false witnesses. He conjured him to declare, whether he was the Christ, the Son of the living God, which question the Lord unequivocally answered in the affirmative. Immediately before the decisive question and reply, the remark in Luke xxii. 67, 68, should be placed, in which the Saviour states the motive of his silence.

In the question of the high priest, the phrases, "*Christ*" and "*Son of God*," are brought together. But since the name, "*Son of God*," stands here last, nothing is more simple, than to see in it a closer definition of the first expression. But because the high priest used the name, "*Son of God*," it does not follow that he was universally known by this title; it is rather to be understood thus, "Art thou the Son of God, whom you declare yourself to be?" The sequel shows that the high priest, like the people before, saw blasphemy in this, which was not the case with the declaration, that he was the Messiah. The public *oath* of Christ, that he was the Son of God, with

the full declaration of his future coming in glory, is very important, because we see in it how the command of the sermon on the Mount (Matt. v. 35) is to be understood, and that it does not refer to the faithful, in their relations to the world. This passage is important moreover, because Jesus declares publicly, before the highest theocratical assembly, that which he had before taught only privately. Jesus thereby stated the whole idea of the Messiah, as it were a certainty, that all had attained its fulfilment in him. Immediately the Sanhedrim was led by this remark, to view the importance of the moment in all its extent; they must know, at this hour, they were judging the king of their nation, him of whom all the prophets had predicted. This public declaration of the Saviour, therefore, decides the extent of their guilt. In this sublime moment, the words of Christ attain a regal majesty, he speaks as the Lord of Heaven, and not as a helpless defendant before an earthly tribunal. To the declaration of his Messiahship, the threat of his future return fol-

lows. Here a sublime and touching contrast is presented, as so often occurs in the Gospel narrative. The judge of the living and the dead stands accused before an human judge, and is condemned by him ; but, at this moment, the Saviour opens to view his own majesty, in which he, as judge of the whole world, will appear to his earthly judges. In his expression, the idea of the sublimest dignity is given — of a participation in God's government of the universe. This was known to Jesus in the depth of his humiliation, and he dared declare it to his judges. If we consider the holy zeal, and spiritual power, in which the Lord must have spoken these words, we can suppose, that a sad anticipation must have thrilled through the priests, that he spoke truly. But they had gone too far to retract. In affected sorrow, the high priest rent his robe, and declared Jesus a blasphemer, and the Sanhedrim condemned the Lord of Glory ; him, who loved them even unto death, they hated unto death. They did not know certainly, that he was the Messiah, and they

might have regarded the capture of Christ as a proof, that he was not he ; much less the Son of God ; but their impure heart was still struck with the splendor of his divine nature ; and only because they had closed their spiritual vision, in fear of seeing too much, and being obliged to abandon their sinful practices, they did not arrive at entire clearness of conviction. Hence their uncertainty was their guilt, and it was the terrible curse of this guilt, to become, in their blindness, the murderers of the Holy One of God.

SECTION IV.**TRANSACTIONS BEFORE PILATE.**

(Matt. xxvii. 1-31; Mark xv. 1-20; Luke xxiii. 1-25; John xviii. 28-xix. 16.)

THE Sanhedrim was still in session on the night of the arrest of Jesus, when, as the morning drew near, the tribunal condemned him to death, and therefore led him to Pilate, since the right over life and death was taken away from the Jews. Here now (Matt. xxvii. 3-10) Matthew introduces the history of the unhappy Judas, who forms the **SECOND FIGURE** in the sublime picture of the Passion History. We here bring together all that refers to him and his spiritual condition.

JUDAS. We first consider his external history. When Judas had gained the result of his treachery, he shuddered at it, and, stung by remorse, brought the silver to the chief priests. His repentance sprang from the

consciousness of having betrayed an innocent being, such as he knew Christ to be. With the coldness of iron, the hypocritical Pharisees repulse the unhappy man, and lay all the guilt upon him, and declare themselves innocent of the deed, although they were in the highest degree culpable. Driven to despair by these comfortless words, he threw down the money and went and hanged himself.

The passage in Matthew, in which Judas is said to have hanged himself, seems to contradict Acts i. 18, in which he is said to have fallen headlong, and burst asunder in the midst, and his bowels to have gushed out. The contradiction vanishes, by supposing that, in hanging himself, he fell with such violence as to tear open his bowels.

After Judas had cast away the silver, the Priests give a fresh example of their hypocrisy. Since it was the price of blood, they would not place the money in the treasury of the temple, lest they should defile themselves, but they did not come to a consciousness of their sins, in having condemned the

innocent. They bought a field to bury strangers in.

A few words more upon the personal character of Judas. The question immediately presents itself; upon what ground did our Lord call Judas into his company? Was it not solely by this call, that the terrible sin, by which he fell, was made possible? The obvious answer, that Jesus was mistaken in his choice, is to be rejected, because it contradicts what is expressly declared of the knowledge of our Lord. He, who knew what was in man, knew what was in Judas, and that he must betray him. We must therefore examine more deeply into the question. It is none the better for men, if the evil, that is in the germ within them, never reaches its actual development; had Judas not actually betrayed Jesus, this would have made no difference in his real character. And the company of Christ might have been made a means of destroying the seeds of evil in his heart; in this respect, he is situated precisely like all others, to whom abundant spiritual aids are offered,

which they do not make use of. It may be said, that it would have been better for him not to have attained these means, but we must remember that, without them, all possibility of help would have been taken away. Yet there is another difficulty; for Judas appears to constitute a case by himself, inasmuch as he lay under a *necessity* of doing the impious deed. According to prophecy, Jesus was to be put to death, and on his death the salvation of the world was grounded; it therefore appears, as if some one must betray him, and as if Judas therefore had only the *misfortune* to be obliged to perform this part, but that the guilt was not his. This observation leads us to the oft-repeated consideration of the connexion between liberty and necessity. In Matt. xxvi. 24, the Saviour speaks of the necessity of his death, but yet lays the whole blame upon Judas, or, in other words, declares that he had acted *freely*. We can arrive at no new discoveries by perplexing ourselves upon this subject; the human mind always comes to the oft-repeated conclusion, that in *God* all things

are *necessary*, in *man* all is *free*, and that accordingly the knowledge of God of the development and actions of man is but the *necessary* knowledge of them as *free* beings. The same difficulty, that meets us in the case of Judas, occurs in considering every sinful life; and therefore the history of Judas is not in this respect peculiar. If we maintain in reference to him, that his election was not accidental, but that Jesus, according to his deep knowledge of their inner natures, made choice of the twelve; then it is clear, that he could not exclude Judas. Since his high call placed him in a situation, which gave him a possibility of salvation, on the other hand, there was another possibility given, which by his own free will was made a reality, so that he refused the proffered aid, and threw himself into the gulf of perdition.

If we look at the gradual development of his sinful life, we find the Scripture assigns as his great besetting sin — avarice. This sin is called by Paul the root of all evil. We easily see what is meant by this, if we

consider that the nature of avarice is nothing else than the most selfish covetousness ; considered as heaping up outward goods, it appears only in its coarsest form ; spiritually considered, it is that sinful disposition, that seeks to appropriate all things to self. Doubtless all the activity of Judas, on account of the kingdom of God, rested on the hope of his obtaining something great in it. Vain wishes of various kinds undoubtedly appeared in the *heads* of the other disciples, but, their *hearts* were filled with a love, far other than for themselves. The plan of Judas was developed no doubt at first gradually. The little acts of treachery in which he allowed himself, and after which he still kept the company of the Holy One, without making amends and confessing his sin, hardened his heart gradually, and brought him within the influence of the power of darkness. When now the hour came, in which this had full sway, and poured hellish thoughts into his heart, then the power of resistance failed ; the pieces of silver, which the priests offered him, dazzled his perverted

sense. Long, perchance, the better part may have struggled within him with these devilish thoughts, but the chains of darkness had already bound him ; — he submitted. The tragic end of the unfortunate disciple, and the rise of penitence upon view of the consequences of his deed, have in modern times induced many to extenuate his guilt, and to ascribe to him this or that milder motive for the deed. Such attempts, seen from one side, certainly manifest the kind disposition, which strives to palliate our brother's sins ; but when viewed on the other side, they appear manifestations, and not the only instances, of a deficient moral sense, and of a reluctance to look the whole magnitude of sinful conduct full in the face, because the root of the same may be found in our own bosoms. Mild charity of judgment united with that full power of truth, which expresses itself boldly, and calls evil evil, is found only among those faithful hearts, who have learned to recognise sin in all its magnitude, and to overcome it by the Saviour's aid. Had true repentance been aroused in

Judas, he would have pronounced sentence against himself, and called his offence, as it truly was, a fearful, devilish deed, which could have been only the fruit of a whole life of sin. His weak regret was merely fright at the consequences of his crime, and nothing but despair could result from it. If we adhere to this strictly moral view of the conduct of Judas, we must attribute to it an uncommon character. Regret for the deed, although it is a fearful proof of his infidelity, shows clearly, that his nobler self was not wholly dead. And his self-murder, that new sin, produced by the first, proves him different from that brutal class of beings, who can be satisfied with the quiet enjoyment of what they have stolen. Common men become little villains, when they resign themselves to the power of darkness; great characters become great villains, when they allow sin to prevail over them. Although it may be thought, that Judas brought up in his mind many excuses for his treachery, that his vanity had been wounded by the rebuke of Jesus, that his grasping soul desired a speedier

manifestation of the kingdom of God, and that he was persuaded, that by the delivering of Jesus into the hands of the enemy, this event would be hastened, and the Saviour freed by a miracle : his crime is not essentially altered by such considerations. It takes its terrible character not from the outward action, but from the inward disposition, which was the root from which it grew. This disposition consisted in alienation from God, want of faith and love, inordinate attachment to the world and to self ; this one sin became the mother of others, and his end was, *that he went to his own place.* (Acts i. 25.) Could we suppose, that Peter, in his fiery, self-willed nature, had come to the opinion, that by delivering Christ into the enemy's hand, he might force him to reveal his majesty ; could we suppose this, we must still allow, that, notwithstanding the outward resemblance, there would be an especial difference between the inward character of his conduct and that of Judas. Since, supposing it had been so, what would Peter's feelings have been, had the Saviour

been condemned, as after the treachery of Judas? Unutterable sorrow would have seized him; but because all his perversities had been well and sincerely meant, he would not have lost faith in Divine Love; his sin would not have led him to a comfortless despair, but to true and faithful repentance, and so his deed would not have been made the mother of new disobedience, but a source of thorough regeneration.

PILATE. We are now in a position where we can take a deeper view of the character of Pilate. We consider him as the third important figure in the picture of the last hours of Jesus. We turn from Peter the weak, and Judas the fallen believer, to the public opposers of our Lord, and find in Pilate a man of the world, who is not devoid of sensibility to divine impressions, (of which the Pharisees show no symptoms,) but sunk in the skepticism of the higher class of society of that age. He is so bound down by worldly considerations of all kinds, as to sacrifice his conscience to the circumstances, which were his god. Pontius Pilate was

the fifth Procurator of Judea, the successor of Valerius Gratus. In the thirteenth year of Tiberius, he attained his dignity. The Procurator of Judea was subordinate to the Proconsul of Syria, who resided in Cesarea. According to Josephus, Pilate must have exercised much oppression and cruelty against the Jews. He may have been induced to this, by the frequent disturbances of the people and by the fear of Tiberius; partly too, because it was the prevalent custom of the Roman dignitaries to indulge themselves in all manner of extortions, in the Provinces. He was susceptible to the influences of the Divinity; he believed in Christ, even against his own will. But in part his skepticism, which was so common in the nobility of his day, and in part his fear of man, brought on his fall.

According to John, Pilate immediately inquires into the grounds of the arraignment of Jesus. He might have heard already many things about Jesus, (which his wife's dream seems to show,) and have known that the Jews persecuted him on religious grounds.

He therefore tells them to lead him before the Sanhedrim, and punish him according to their own laws. They reply by declaring, that he had been condemned to death by that body, but that the execution of the sentence did not belong to them. It has already been remarked, that Josephus and the Rabbins unanimously declare, that the Jews, forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem, were deprived of the power of inflicting capital punishment.

The Jews did not use the punishment of crucifixion, which the Romans inflicted upon great criminals, who were not Roman citizens. This form of punishment, then, must be considered as the consequence of leading Jesus before the Roman tribunal. Had Pilate been more compliant, and condemned Jesus on religious grounds, he would probably have delivered him to the Jews to be stoned ; but since the Jews saw themselves compelled to appeal to political considerations, Pilate was obliged to pass judgment according to the Roman law. This was very important in the view of John, since a

prophecy of Christ, regarding the manner of his death, was thereby fulfilled, (xviii. 32.) This prophecy was not important, merely as the foretelling of an accidental event, but because crucifixion may be regarded as a very significant symbol, and because the crucifixion is actually connected with the resurrection. As terrible as this kind of punishment is, it yet does not destroy or dismember the bodily organization, like stoning and other capital punishments. The Divine Wisdom permitted that the Son of God should die in this way, in order to save his holy body from mutilation.

The conversation of Christ with Pilate, shows (John xviii. 33) that, at first, political affairs were not under consideration. The conversation related to the idea of the kingdom of the Messiah, from which it evidently follows, that they had accused him only as a false Messiah. The same appears also in Matthew and Mark. Luke, on the contrary, introduces the political element in the beginning, which ought to be transferred to the end of the trial. When Pilate saw the

Lord in great majesty answering nothing to all the accusations, he wondered at such extraordinary conduct. He then caused Jesus to be led away from the thronging crowd into the palace, and held a private conversation with him.

We must now strive to obtain an accurate idea of the proceedings of Pilate with Christ. The Procurator inhabited the old palace of Herod, a large and magnificent building. Before this palace stood the tribunal upon which Pilate sat, while he treated with the Jews. But in order to speak with Jesus alone, he retired several times into the palace. This, like the abode of Annas, had a court, in which a cohort of soldiers was stationed. A portico, through which a door led, enclosed this towards the street. Through this the Jews dared not enter, for fear of defiling themselves; they therefore remained without around the judgment seat. The building with the court is called, by the Evangelists, Pretorium.

As soon as Pilate had withdrawn into the Pretorium, (probably into the court,) and

had called Jesus to him, he asked, *whether he was the King of the Jews*. Our Lord's reply was another question, "askest thou this of thyself?" This leads us to suppose, that in the public accusation, before brought, the expression, "King of the Jews," had not been introduced. It was therefore important to Christ, in order to know the state of Pilate's mind, to understand the sense in which he used this expression; whether as a Roman, in the simple outward meaning of a *political* ruler, or according to the Jewish idea of a theocratical regal Messiah. Pilate hereupon openly declared that he was no Jew, and he could not decide upon the religious questions of the Jews, but that the high priests had led him before the tribunal to be punished. When Jesus now saw, that Pilate rightly understood the state of the circumstances, and no misunderstanding was to be feared, he openly declared, that he was king, and had a kingdom. The power of this kingdom, however, he describes negatively; *my kingdom is not of this world*. The truth

of this struck the mind of Pilate at once; for Jesus had suffered himself to be arrested without making the least resistance to the authority of the magistracy, and therefore proved that he had no hostile undertaking in view. The expression, "*my kingdom is not of this world*," has often been regarded as limiting the kingdom of Christ to the inner and moral world. But the relation of the kingdom of Christ toward the world, is all that is expressed: no limit is assigned to the extent of the kingdom of God. Considered only as the kingdom of truth, it must necessarily tend to become the only and all-prevailing kingdom, both inward and outward.

From the idea of a *kingdom*, Pilate immediately conceives the notion of a king, and repeats the question to Jesus, whether he considered himself as such; to which Christ simply assented. Many expositors, Tholuck among them, see nothing but mockery and scorn in this question of Pilate; but the seriousness of our Lord's reply seems to contradict this. The whole of Pilate's

subsequent conduct shows, that his heart was touched. The character of Jesus appeared to him imposing; he at least perceived something noble and dignified in his person. The stricter definition, which our Lord gives to his declaration, embraces the idea of king in its fullest and most profound signification. He places its origin above this world, whereby his "king" is designated as more than earthly. He now comes forward as a conqueror for truth, who forms his own true kingdom, or as an absent monarch, who regains possession of his kingdom. Every one, who belongs to his kingdom, (bears the truth in himself, is born of it,) hears his voice, and arrays himself under his banner. This expression evidently offered an opportunity to Pilate to acknowledge himself for a friend of truth, and a subject of him, who is truth itself. The question may very naturally be asked, "who in this sinful world can be said to *be of the truth?*" If we compare John x. 14, we shall find that this expression does not denote sinlessness, (since the Apostles heard the word of

Christ and were not sinless, as the example of Peter full well shows,) but only susceptibility to the truth. There are unfeeling, dead hearts, in whom the voice of truth raises no response, and even wakes opposition; there are others again, whose inmost soul resounds, when a tone of truth reaches them, while they feel that it alone can satisfy their secret aspirations. The Saviour, the Lord and King of Truth, calls all such to himself, his will strives to rule unrestrained in their hearts. Pilate, as a scholar of the Greek Philosophy, knew very well that the Lord used the word truth in its highest and absolute sense, but was skeptical as to the possibility of attaining to absolute truth. Like so many of the noblest men of that remarkable age of commotion, Pilate had fallen into skepticism; * he had gone through the circles of the systems of philosophy without finding the truth. This despair of the truth is expressed by the question, *what is truth?* So far from finding scorn or

* Vide Pliny.

mockery in this expression, we should rather consider it as the sorrowful indication of the desolation of his spirit. The Roman, moved, broke off the conversation, and he, the heathen, defended the Royal Messiah against the Jews, the people of God, the peculiar people, who breathed nothing but revenge against the Holy One of God. He proposed to them, that according to the custom of releasing a prisoner at the Feast, he should release to them the imprisoned Jesus, the Christ. The question here occurs, whether, according to the account of Luke, this proposition of Pilate to release Jesus ought not to be placed after the sending him away to Herod. We speak of no formal contradiction between Luke and John, because John does not mention the sending away to Herod at all; John seems to imply only, that the proposal in regard to freeing Jesus immediately followed the events we have been considering. But if we consider, that John narrates with far more particularity and care than Luke, and if we consider that the political accusations flowing from the first refu-

sal of Pilate to condemn Christ, first gave occasion to send him away to Herod ; it becomes probable that the whole scene took place before the sending of Christ to Herod. As to the custom of releasing a prisoner on a feast-day, it is doubtful whether it was of Roman or Jewish origin. According to Livy, at the Roman *lectisternia*, all prisoners were released from bonds. In the case at hand, only *one* appears to be restored to freedom. It is therefore more likely that the custom was a Jewish one. It is so natural a custom, that it even now prevails in many states, especially among the Orientals. In Western Empires, the same thing takes place upon accessions to the throne.

BARABBAS. Together with the Saviour, another prisoner was now proposed for deliverance ; one, who had, in a tumult, committed a murder. The name of this man, of whom nothing else is known, was Barabbas. It is remarked, that three manuscripts and the Armenian, and one Syriac version besides, assign him the name Jesus. These considerations, together with a statement of

Origen's, make it highly probable, that *Jesus Barabbas* was the name. This father of the Church shows how this reading was probably lost. It was thought unfitting, that the murderer should bear the holy name Jesus, and therefore the word Barabbas only was retained in the text. It is remarkable, that the question is framed as if there were two of the name of Jesus; "will you that I release unto you the Jesus who is called Christ, or him that is called Barabbas?" The saying seems applicable here; *ludit in humanis divina potentia rubus*. We find more than one instance, in the Passion History, of a similar display of Providential Power in matters apparently trifling. Even the name Barabbas itself has a remarkable significance; it means, son of the father. According to this, the whole character of the Saviour appears to be caricatured in Barabbas; and it is not improbable, that his whole undertaking was a caricature of the Holy One, since he had probably pretended to the authority of the Messiah. The deluded people in their blindness chose the hellish cari-

cature, instead of the heavenly original ; all the endeavors of Pilate, who well knew the hatred of the priests towards Jesus, were fruitless. The priests demanded Barabbas, and determined that Jesus should be crucified. While the Procurator from his judgment seat was thus striving to save Jesus Christ from the hands of the bloody priests, a message came from his wife, which made him mindful and anxious for the *just* man, whom he was called to judge. Her name, according to tradition, was Claudia Procula, and she had followed her husband into the Province. She had probably heard much about the person of Christ, and understood the danger in which her husband was placed of doing a fearful wrong by passing sentence of condemnation. The strange fancies, that the dream of Procula was a miracle of Christ, in order to save himself from death, or a miracle of the devil, in order to defeat the plan of redemption, need no refutation. But we cannot help asking, in regard to this remarkable occurrence, on what grounds did Providence permit this warning? Since the

death of Christ was actually determined, this dream appears to have done only harm; it must have increased the responsibility of Pilate, who already knew too much to be innocent, and who was still too strongly bound by the chains of worldliness, to dare boldly to defend the right. It may be remarked, in the first place, that the dream of Procula was of service to herself, and it is not improbable, that it led her to faith in Christ. Moreover, the law of necessity must not be so considered, as to limit the freedom of our individual actions. From the human *subjective* point of view, it was possible for Pilate to acquit Christ, and even to confess faith in him, just as it was possible that the members of the Sanhedrim, who were favorably disposed to Christ, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, might have professed faith in him and changed the determination of that assembly. It is clear, that if anything of this kind had taken place, the whole history of the world would have been changed, and this leads us back to that high *objective* necessity, which rests

with God and not with men, whose actions, as being free, serve to fulfil the Divine necessity. It was right according to the Divine decree, since the death of Christ was not merely an apparent, but a real fruit of the sins of man, that every opportunity should be afforded to Pilate, to enable him to ascertain the innocence of Christ. If his sinfulness was thereby increased, it was the curse of his untruth, by which his susceptibility to divine emotion, and all the means afforded him for recognising the Divine Being, proved fatal to him, because they could not induce him to decide for the right.

In order to deter Pilate in his exertions in behalf of Christ, the chief priests advanced an accusation against him, that was very offensive to Pilate : they accused him of a political offence ; that he had perverted the nation, and forbidden them to pay tribute to Cæsar. The power of darkness had so blinded them, that they did not feel the absurdity of freeing the actual rebel, and of falsely accusing him of rebellion, who had expressly declared, that the things that were

Cæsar's should be rendered to Cæsar. But while they repeat these accusations, so dangerous for Pilate, they mention that he commenced his operations in Galilee. The unhappy Pilate gladly seized hold of this, hoping to force himself from the burden of responsibility, by placing it upon another. Yet in this course he evidently endangered the life of the just one, which he should have defended even at the risk of his own, since Herod could pass a sentence of death upon him as his subject. We now find him near his fall; the sending to Herod was but a short respite, which he sought for his stricken conscience. Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee, at that time was present at Jerusalem at the Feast. Pilate had Christ led to him. It must now be granted, that Jesus was not born in Galilee, but in Judea. Herod therefore sent him back, without bringing him to trial. From this state of things, the conduct of Jesus towards him is to be explained. Herod was his ruler, inasmuch as Jesus had dwelt the longer time in his dominions, but he was

not born under him, and did not stand accused before him as his official judge. The culpable curiosity of Herod obtained as little satisfaction from Jesus, as was given in the conversation with Annas. The revengeful priests had accompanied the Lord to Herod. They stood around and vehemently accused him. But when Herod saw nothing remarkable in him, he ascribed this to the incapacity of Jesus, made sport of him with his body guard, clad him in mockery in a purple robe, and sent him back to Pilate. Luke remarks, they had become reconciled this day, since otherwise they had been opposed to each other. Whether the cruelty of Pilate against some of the subjects of Herod had kindled this enmity, it does not appear. It is not said, that the sending of Christ to Herod was the cause of this reconciliation. It is only said, that it took place upon that day. This remark would have been aimless, if Luke had not meant to convey a deeper idea ; but the observation is very important, that very often, in case of an attack upon some nobler personage, the

otherwise opposite interests of men of the world are all united, in order to put down the germinating element, that is springing up to oppose them. This comes, even if they are not aware of it, from the correct idea, that the free development of this new element must destroy all their interests: hence individual grudges are for the time kept out of sight, in order to save the common good. The persecutions of the church exhibit this drama on a grand scale.

With what feelings must Pilate behold the wild multitude thronging back to his palace. He had hoped to free himself from the responsibility, and behold, it is again placed upon him! He repeats that he finds no guilt in Jesus, and mentions that Herod had found none. In order to give some satisfaction to their wild hatred, he orders Jesus to be scourged; this was an act of clemency in his eyes, in order, if possible, to save an innocent life. - While the soldiers scourged Jesus in the courtyard, Pilate had probably retired into his inner apartments; and in his absence the Roman soldiers surrender them-

selves to their wild lust in their mockery of the sublime prisoner ; but without knowing what they do, they form a deeply significant symbol, which wakes a multitude of contrasted thoughts. They crown the King of Heaven and Earth, in token of the bitterness of the dominion, which he exercised over the souls of millions. When they had thus arrayed the Saviour, Pilate came forth from the palace, led him in his garment of sorrow from the court yard, and showed the people their king with a crown of thorns upon his head, saying, *Behold the man*. The only just interpretation of this expression is that, which supposes it to flow from the Roman's sympathy in the fate of him who had so deeply moved his heart. Tholuck's idea of Pilate, as an entirely weak man of the world, hurts the deep interest of the scene between him and Christ. He seems to have felt much of the Lord's greatness, and thereby to be more guilty, than if the case had been otherwise. This view of his character is supported by his skepticism, which very weak spirits are not prone to

feel, and also by his subsequent conversations with our Lord, which disclose in a remarkable manner the inward struggle of the unhappy Roman, and manifest that germ of faith, that would develop itself in his heart.

While the rough Roman, who had been bred amid the battle tumult, and had dwelt amid cruelty and hardship, was moved with sorrowful compassion, when he saw the Lord with the crown of thorns, in whom heavenly majesty was so wondrously mingled with the deepest humility—those ministers of the sanctuary, who had been their life long conversant with the holy law and the prophecies, raised their pitiless shout: crucify him, crucify him! Once more Pilate was willing to deliver him up to them for punishment, which should not be capital, but they thirsted for his blood. Hereupon they brought a new accusation, which demanded the penalty of death according to their law. They accused him of being a blasphemer, since he pretended to be the Son of God. This proves clearly that they did not use the expression “Son of God” as synonymous with “Christ,”

or "King of the Jews;" since they had already accused Jesus of calling himself the Christ, but this other name was new to Pilate. In the assumption of this name, they saw a blasphemy, which deserved death according to the law. This new charge terrified Pilate still more; he again left his judgment seat, led Jesus again into the palace, and began to question him more closely about his origin. Since the earthly origin of Jesus had been ascertained by the mission to Herod, we must consider Pilate's question, "whence art thou," as referring to the name "Son of God." Pilate wished to know whether he was of a higher origin, and actually a Son of God. His idea of a Son of God may have been somewhat indistinct, like that of the centurion at the crucifixion; but he must have thought, even if he took the phrase in its most vague generality, that it designated a Heavenly Nature. The fact that the mind of the skeptic was so deeply penetrated by this circumstance, goes strongly against the supposition of his extreme weakness. By the exhibition of this heav-

only character, his hollow skeptical system was prostrated; the reality of the Divinity, in its indwelling power, took hold of his soul, while in his professions he denied its reality. The deep inward wants of his nature, which by mistaken speculation had driven him to skepticism, here acted with all their power. His spirit's eye saw the light, and he could not persuade himself that it did not exist. What loftiness and majesty the air of Jesus must have expressed, that, although in the deepest humiliation, under the Jewish form so odious to the heathen, and in a garb of mockery, he should have struck with wonder and admiration the mind of Pilate! The Saviour replied no more to Pilate's questions; he felt that the Roman would not fight the battle through, and he did not wish to lead him into further temptation. The Roman was moved to astonishment and anguish by this silence; he sought to compel Christ by force to reply. Our Lord made use of this intimation to warn Pilate of a mighty power, which was above him; by this he raises the sense of depend-

ence in the mind of Pilate, and also expresses his own consciousness, that he himself is ruled by the high power of God, and not by his own might. With heartfelt compassion for the situation of the unhappy Roman, the Saviour, foreseeing the result of the struggle, declares, that those hardhearted priests, who not only thirsted after his own blood, but led Pilate into such severe temptation, sinned far more than he. Deeply abased, as he was, the accused appears here again, as before the Sanhedrim, like the Judge and Sovereign, while he estimates the sin of the Roman Ruler, and gives him a gleam of hope for forgiveness. With sublime dignity the Saviour had addressed Pilate; and he, instead of feeling offended, began now for the first time to think of freeing him, as if he had done nothing from the beginning. But his efforts were powerless. The secret bonds of the world held his weak nature in too strong embrace; he spoke the words: *You are not a friend to Caesar*; and he fell!

Now Pilate led Jesus quickly forward,

placed himself upon the judgment seat, and after he had called out, *Behold your King*, less probably in order to raise compassion, than to deride the people, who so cruelly compelled him to act against his conscience, he pronounced the sentence, and gave the Saviour up to them for crucifixion.

There is a chronological difficulty in regard to the hour, in which the condemnation took place. John speaks of the sixth hour, as that of the condemnation, while Mark says the crucifixion took place at the third hour. According to Matthew and Luke also, the Saviour had been sometime on the cross at the sixth hour. But some manuscripts have *third* instead of sixth hour, inserted in John; and moreover, it should be remembered, that John wrote for the people of Asia Minor especially, and might count time from midnight according to the Roman custom, and thus his statement, that Jesus was condemned on the sixth hour, would not be inconsistent with the statement of the others, that he was crucified before the third hour. According to this, the condemnation

took place at six o'clock, (according to our method of computing time,) and the crucifixion before nine.

Matthew alone states, that Pilate, by a symbolical act, freed himself in the eyes of the people of the guilt of the death of a just man. But his previous sentence, together with the declaration, that he was a just man, whom he had delivered up to crucifixion, shows this act to have been an empty ceremony. But the deluded people cried out, *his blood be upon us and our children* ; unconsciously invoking a blessing upon themselves, since while the blood of Abel calls for vengeance, the blood of Christ calls for forgiveness. After the withdrawal of Pilate, who had now released Barabbas to the people, the rough soldiers may have made more mockery of Jesus, as has been before mentioned, since he still wore the purple robe and the crown of thorns. When they would lead him to the place of punishment, they put his own clothes upon him, and then burdened him with the cross.

Now that we have reached the conclusion

of the trial of Christ before Pilate, the end of the unhappy Roman deserves some mention. It is nowhere told how the news of the Lord's resurrection affected him. According to Josephus, he indulged in so many abuses and oppressions, subsequently, that the Proconsul of Syria deposed him from his office in the last year of Tiberius, and banished him into Gaul. As to what the Fathers of the Church say of the "Acts" of Pilate, which he sent to Rome in regard to the death of Christ, and which induced Tiberius to adopt Jesus among the number of Gods, the whole account is so garnished, as undoubtedly to deserve no more credit than a mere legend. But according to the Gospel History, it is highly probable that Pilate actually wrote to Tiberius on the subject, for since political affairs were concerned in the trial, he would be unwilling that any tidings of a King of the Jews should reach Rome before his own. But since he had already condemned Jesus to death, there was no ground for concealing his favorable opinion of the Saviour. From the

favorable statements of Pilate, a legend may have been formed, that Tiberius had allowed Christ to be adopted by the Senate into the company of the gods.

SECTION V.

CRUCIFIXION AND DEATH OF JESUS.

Matt. xxvii. 32-36; Mark xv. 21-41; Luke xxiii.
26-29; John xix. 17-30.

IN wild haste and contrary to all usage, the chief priests lead Jesus, who had scarcely been condemned, to the place of punishment. The guiltless One is attended by some Roman soldiers, (from a German legion stationed in Palestine,) and goes forth bearing his cross. The symbolical expression, *to take up his cross*, receives its deep sanctity from this affecting proceeding. The Saviour was probably so exhausted by the heavy struggle of body and soul, that he fainted under the heavy burden. For him, who was the helper of all, another was obliged to bear the cross, a certain Simon of Cyrene. It is commonly supposed, after

Grotius, that this Simon was a follower of Christ, and therefore was chosen for this purpose. But this seems to me the less probable, because he must in that case have been in the city, and been present at the trial of Jesus. But since he came in from the country, it seems to me more probable, that he before was not acquainted with Jesus; and perhaps this office, which he performed for Jesus, was the means of leading him to God, so that his bodily toil attained a heavenly reward. Simon subsequently adhered with his family to Christ, for Luke states him to have been the father of Alexander and Rufus, who of course must have been known by name to the first readers of the Gospel.

Upon the way to the place of crucifixion, many persons followed Jesus, especially women, who manifested their sympathy by lamentations and tears. The words, which Jesus addressed to their sympathising hearts, seem surprising; they contain nothing to console or help, but rather the contrary. But in the first place, we must consider, that

the company of women, who followed him to the grave, are not to be regarded as being all believers; for the words of Luke (xxiii. 28) do not favor such an idea. Again, the faithful had no cause to fear the terrible judgments, of which our Lord spoke, since, according to the Lord's promise, they, like Noah and Lot, would be saved from these. Moreover the sympathy of these women is to be regarded less as an expression of consciousness of what was going forward, than as a merely natural impulse of pity, such as the excitable feelings of women so readily express. Nevertheless, it was undoubtedly grateful to the Saviour's heart to experience this warm and compassionate interest, after the many outbreaks of cruelty which he had endured; but his exalted spirit, even in view of bitter death, thought not of his own pleasure, which might have induced him, by uttering his hearty thanks to the women, to increase the gentle stream of their pity: he rather sought to secure a permanent blessing to their well-meaning hearts. Such a blessing could be ensured only by their be-

ing made conscious of the magnitude of what was taking place and of its necessary consequences, and by their being thus led to sincere repentance. Therefore the Saviour bids them to turn away from him unto themselves; *weep not for me, but for yourselves and your children*. They, as members of the nation, bear part of the guilt, and must share the punishment. The Saviour describes the magnitude of this punishment in words of the Old Testament. He, in proverbial language, in which the innocent are compared with the green tree, the godless with the dry tree, closes his address, the purport of which was to awaken a consciousness of their alienation from God, and to induce them earnestly to seek the way of salvation.

Two malefactors are led to Golgotha with Christ and crucified with him, one on the right hand, the other on the left. The prophetic saying, "*he shall be numbered with transgressors*," was thereby fulfilled. As to the place of crucifixion, this was the usual spot, called the place of a skull, from

the heaps of the skulls of unfortunate beings, who had breathed their life out there. As to the *form* of crucifixion, we need only inquire into the single point, whether the feet were usually nailed or bound. The common opinion in the ancient and modern church, that the feet were pierced with nails, has been oposed by Dr. Paulus, Rosenmüller, Kuinoel, and others, but there seems no good reason for departing from the old view, as maintained from Luke xxiv. 39, and Psalm xxii. 17.

The Romans were accustomed to administer to the unfortunate prisoners an intoxicating drink, in order to make them less sensible to the terrible pangs of this most cruel punishment. Mark speaks of this drink, as being wine mingled with myrrh, and Matthew calls it vinegar mingled with gall. These two views may be entirely reconciled by considering, that vinegar is nothing but common sour wine, and gall is a term applied to all bitter substances.

But if we compare Luke xxiii. 36, where it is expressly numbered among the soldiers'

acts of mockery, that they reached to the Saviour vinegar, and if we also consider Psalm lxi. 22, where it is reckoned among the sufferings of the Messiah, that he shall take vinegar and gall, there is no doubt, that the Evangelists regarded this an addition to his sorrows. But this view does not take away our belief, that the original cause of such a drink was kindness ; since, if it apparently was an act of love, it was yet the expression of a very unholy love, wherefore the Saviour regarded it as a fresh mockery, and as soon as he had tasted the drink, turned away from it, because he wished to meet death with a clear and rational consciousness. During the nailing him to the cross, he probably made the touching prayer ; "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." The expression, "Father," shows that, even at the moment in which he was hung upon the cross, the filial spirit towards God was alive in his soul. In his prayer, he not only embraced the soldiers, who performed the crucifixion ; they were the mere instruments, without responsibility, yea

even without guilt, those only excepted, who exercised unnecessary cruelty ; his prayer more especially embraced in its broad compass all those, who were guilty of his death, even the chief priests and Pilate. If ignorance as to what they did seems to be assigned, as an excuse for them, we must remember, as before remarked, that the very ignorance of those, that were murdering the Holy One of God, was their guilt, and this demanded the Saviour's, the great High Priest's, prayer for its pardon.

The Synopsists speak very briefly of the parting of the garments of Jesus, and of the inscription over the cross ; but John mentions these particulars very expressly. It was the custom with the Romans, as in the Kingdom of Turkey, to attach a tablet to all criminals, which stated the causes of their punishment. In Roman language, this was called "titulus." Pilate might perhaps have ordered this expression to have been written without any particular design ; but when he observed, that the form, in which it was composed, was disagreeable to the priests,

whom he hated, he persisted in it, and made no alteration. The cunning priests feared a bad impression would be made by the fact, that Jesus was represented as the King of the Jews, without more particular explanation; it was too likely to call to mind those passages of the Old Testament, in which the Jews are represented as despising their King, and he is described as in the deepest humiliation. They justly feared, that these passages would be used as proofs, that Jesus was the true Messiah. After the crucifixion was completed, four soldiers, who had been appointed for the purpose, sat under the cross, and divided the garments of Jesus into four parts; but they cast lots for the mantle, which was without seam. The Evangelist here refers to Psalm xxii. 19, in which this proceeding is described with astonishing accuracy, which furnishes a new proof, how our Lord unites in himself and his fate the greatest and the least in incomparable union.

Thus the Son of God hung between Heaven and Earth, slain upon the cross, as

upon an altar, like a patient lamb, bearing the sins of the world. Still the measure of his suffering was not filled. The passers-by reviled him, and the priests insolently repeated the words which he had uttered, in order to mock him; and according to Luke, the soldiers also reviled him.

While Matthew and Mark state, without qualification, that those crucified with Jesus also reviled him; Luke more satisfactorily states, that only one was guilty of this, and that the other in view of approaching death, besought Christ to receive him into his Kingdom, and that Christ granted him his prayer. There is a mysterious charm diffused over this little occurrence.

In the first place, this joyful incident comes so unexpectedly into the throng of sad events, that it astonishes us. While all the disciples were scattered, (only the faithful John was found near the cross,) Judas had betrayed his Lord, and Peter had denied him, while wild hatred was exercised against the Saviour by the priests and the people, and the weakness of Pilate had manifested

itself, — under all these unfavorable circumstances, a living faith appeared in a most wonderful manner in a robber and a murderer. *Moreover*, as long as Christ was not placed upon the cross, many of his adherents might hope, that he would free himself by a miracle. But who could think the pierced right arm of him nailed to the cross mighty enough to lead through the dark vale of the shadow of death ! Who could think him, who died the death of a criminal, worthy to command the gates of Paradise ! We must suppose, that a noble character dwelt in this unhappy man. He may earlier have heard of Christ, and have felt many strong emotions ; still he remains an actual proof, that Christ has come to save sinners, and he stands as a hero of faith, since he believed, when those had lost their faith, who had openly professed, that they owned Christ for the Son of the living God. In the third place, this occurrence suggests to the unprejudiced observer of the Passion History a character, which has been too often mistaken ; the *symbolic* character. The suf-

fering Jesus, as a symbol of a fulness of deep truths and important lessons, speaks a language to the world, which his living word would scarcely have been able to speak forth. If aside from this or that dogmatic view, we consider the history of the dying Jesus, simply, as the Evangelists relate it, we must acknowledge, that even the most boundless fancy could not imagine a poetical creation, like this simple record of a real event. Imagination forms only by analogy, but here is something in every respect incomparable, a fresh product of the Creative Power. He, who in the beginning was with the Father, who could say, *he that seeth me, seeth the Father, as they honor the Father, so should they honor the Son*, and who left all his majesty, in order to take upon himself flesh and blood, hung naked upon the cross; became poor, left all behind, in order to make us rich through his poverty. His head was crowned with thorns in emblem of the sorrows, which the earth, the mother of thorns, prepared for him. Over his head appeared the holy name,

which, as a banner, written in the three great languages of the earth, declared him the King of Glory, whom mankind had hung upon the cross. His arms were outstretched, as if to embrace the world which rejected him, and for whose salvation he still thirsted. At his left hung the infidel malefactor, who, with the rough populace, had reviled the Holy One; at his right was the sinner who repented; so that around the Saviour the representatives of mankind were assembled, both of those, who go the way of perdition, and those who walk the way of salvation. In his deep abasement, the Saviour nevertheless exercised an act of Divine majesty; he received the homage of the faithful, he opened to him the gates of the Heavenly Kingdom. The cross of Christ became a throne, the place of a skull became the world's tribunal.

As to the particulars of this incident, the attempt has been made to deprive it of the extraordinary character; but all these efforts have, without exception, been very weak. The prayer of the thief, *remember me, Lord,*

when thou shalt come in thy Kingdom, has been said to refer merely to a kind remembrance in the world of the blessed ; but the expression, *come in thy Kingdom*, cannot possibly be understood in this way. But if the man supposed Christ to be the Messiah, and applied to him the representations of a suffering Messiah, it is astonishing that this man could do this, and the disciples could not. No new light is given by the expression, which follows, *verily I say unto you, this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise*. These words have been so weakened, as to be translated, " I tell you this day, [comma after day,] thou shalt sometime be with me in Paradise ; God is love, and he will make thee, sometime, blessed." But this expression might have been made by any one, as well as Jesus, and moreover the phrase, *verily I say unto you*, is not suited to such a meaning, as Kuinoel justly observes. The Gospel History evidently states the proceeding in such a way, that the two essential elements of salvation, repentance and faith, seem present in the man's heart ;

it is very likely, that these had their preparatory causes, but this does not destroy the striking point in the proceeding, which lies in the fact, that this man was able in a moment to lay hold of Christ with repentant faith, at a moment, in which none else could.

As to the word, "Paradise," it is in no way to be regarded, as equivalent to "Heaven," or "Heavenly world." Since Jesus is expressly declared by scripture (1 Peter iii. 18) to have descended, immediately after his death, into the kingdom of the dead, it is evident, that Christ could only mean by his promise to the thief, that his soul should go with the Saviour's to the assembly of the dead. In 2 Corinthians xii. 4; the Heavenly world seems to be called "Paradise;" but we must remember, that the Jews distinguished the upper from the lower paradise. The last is synonymous with Abraham's bosom, and marks the place of bliss in the kingdom of the dead, as Gehenna marks the place of suffering.

This scene of infinite sublimity, in which

the Saviour appears, as ruler of the Heavenly world, is followed by another incident, which shows how the Lord, in the severest of his agonies, regarded the least circumstances of his earthly connexions, as well as the most exalted purposes of his life. By the power of perfect love, which always looked beyond itself, and embraced even the stranger in its blessing, he thought of his mother Mary. While her divine son hung upon the cross, the sword, of which Simeon had prophesied, penetrated her soul. All that she had experienced in the most blissful moments of her life was darkened, doubts stormed her soul ; the moment of her own new birth had come ; the mother of Christ was now to bear the new man, the Christ in us. There was no need of any command to induce the faithful disciple to take the mother of the Lord to his own house ; she lived in the lap of love, so that she lacked nothing ; but for her sake the Lord uttered from the cross those words of consolation. The feeling of abandonment would have been too mighty for her, and Jesus there-

fore gave a son to her, when she believed she had lost her beloved one.

In regard to the persons, who are mentioned by John as standing near the cross, it is to be observed, that according to Matthew, and the parallel passages, the persons mentioned are said to have watched the proceedings from afar. This agrees very well with the account in John, if we suppose, that after a while some of them approached the cross. John appears to have been the only one of the disciples, who ventured; among the women, besides Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Mary Magdalene, and Salome, a third Mary is also mentioned. John expressly mentions her as the sister of Jesus' mother, and the wife of a certain Cleopas; Matthew and Mark designate her as the mother of James, (Mark particularizes James the less,) and of Joses. By comparing Matthew (xiii. 55,) we find two persons of this name among those called the Lord's brethren, wherefore the idea is very probable, that these brethren of Christ were sons of his mother's sister, and conse-

quently were his cousins. The name, James the less, serves to distinguish the Lord's brother of this name, from the Apostle James. According to John vii. 5, and Acts i. 18, none of the Lord's brethren was among the twelve.

After these most pathetic incidents at Golgotha, the great moment of the death of the Prince of Life approached. Nature herself seems symbolically to have solemnized the sublimity of this moment; when the light of the world appeared to die out, darkness stretched over the whole country from the sixth until the ninth hour. Luke expressly declares, that the sun was darkened. This might be accounted for by an eclipse of the sun, if the full moon at the Easter time did not destroy such an opinion. Nothing need prevent our assigning in other ways some physical grounds in explanation of this darkness, since it is not said, that there was anything miraculous in it, nor can there be any object for supposing such a miracle. The biblical doctrine of Providence, which excludes all *accidental* coincidences, de-

mands no other view of the occurrence, than the one given. When now the moment of death approached, a still severer agony awaited the Saviour ; it was the last of his earthly life of conflict, but perhaps the severest, since the soul now tore itself away from the bonds of that holy body, which must have been all the more sensitive on account of its sinlessness. The same remarks are in general applicable here, which were made in regard to the agony in Gethsemane ; only the truth is here actually expressed, which we then supposed in order to explain those facts. Here the Saviour laments in the words of Psalm xxii. 1, his abandonment by God. Every attempt to weaken the force of these words should be rejected. The Saviour did not use this language, because the 22d Psalm contained it ; in the inner truth and harmony of his whole life, Jesus used no words, which did not fully express a reality. Every deep consideration of the event forbids our referring the expression to a sense of abandonment on account of his mere *outward* sorrows. Since the greatest

physical suffering is no desolation to him, whose soul is filled with the divine power and joy. But the magnitude of the sufferings of Christ lay in the fact, that his physical torments were attended by a deprivation of divine power in his soul. His bodily nakedness was but an emblem of his inner destitution of all Heavenly ornament.

If we consider, that such abandonment came over him who had said, "I and my Father are one," "He, who hath seen me, hath seen the Father," it is evident, that the object of this, as of the death of Christ, which is to be considered only as the consummation of his sufferings, must be peculiarly, infinitely great. According to scripture, this object was two-fold.

In the first place, the path of sorrow and abandonment was necessary to the perfect development of our Lord's human nature. In the second place, the Saviour suffered this in order to finish all things in himself, as the second Adam. *For by one offering, he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.* (Heb. x. 14.) This fulfilment of the whole

has a negative, and a positive side, which are consistent and nearly connected with one another, but which yet should not be confounded. The *negative* side is the washing away the guilt of a sinful life, the reconciliation with God, the forgiveness of sins; this could not be done without blood, which is the highest evidence of self-sacrificing, devoted love. In this view, the dying Saviour appeared as the lamb of God, who bore the sins of the world. The *positive* side is the communication of a higher principle of life, redemption from the slavery of sin, the creation of the new man — of Christ in us. This side is marked chiefly by the resurrection, which is the necessary consummation of the death of Christ; the other, or negative side, is marked by his death, which was the summit of self-sacrificing love.

In what follows, it is related, that the bystanders misunderstood the exclamation of Christ; they believed that he called upon Elias, whom they expected as the forerunner of the Messiah. Many interpreters con-

sider these words as spoken in mockery, but this is not indicated in a single syllable ; it is more probable, that a secret shudder, such as often shows itself in the most hardened, and seized them more fearfully at a later moment, ran through their minds. These rough mockers might still mistrust, that there was something in the Messiahship of the crucified one, and they shuddered at the thought, that Elias might appear to them amid thunder and storm. Psychologically, this is far more probable, since even the rudest nature, when tired of scorn and mockery towards innocence, is apt to change its mood, and a nobler sentiment arises, even if it appear only in the tremors of a bad conscience.

When our Lord cried out, "I thirst," they hastened and gave to him the sponge with vinegar upon a hyssop-stalk. After Jesus had taken the drink, he called out once more aloud, and expired. According to John, the Saviour used the expression, "it is finished." That this expression has something more than a physical meaning, is de-

clared by the preceding words ; *Jesus knowing, that all things were fulfilled.* But apart from this, our Lord's very nature leads to the more comprehensive sense of expression. Ever inspired by the thought of the exalted object of his mission, he now looked upon it as wholly finished and realized. As by the fall of Adam all was lost, by Christ's victory over all the assaults of darkness the conquest of all was gained. According to Luke, Jesus spoke also the words ; *Father, into thy hands, do I commend my spirit.* In the simple word, "Father," the gentle, filial spirit speaks forth, undisturbed by the magnitude of his pains. While the soul of Christ went to the realm of the dead, (Scheol,) his body rested in the grave, his spirit returned to God ; by the resurrection all were again united in harmonious unity.

This bare and simple narration of the greatest event in the history of the world, the turning point of the old and new world, is followed by some statements of subsequent occurrences, in which the Universe by physical events gave witness of what

took place, as, at the birth of Christ, the sympathy of the spiritual world was expressed by the appearance of the angels. At the moment of the death of the Prince of Life, the earth trembled, the rocks were torn asunder, and the vail of the temple was rent in twain. It is of no consequence, whether we consider this earthquake, as common, or miraculous; since *chance* is here excluded, as is self-evident, and the rich and deeply significant symbol in both cases remains. Upon the Saviour's death, light penetrated into all secret places; the graves were opened, Hades and its dead beheld the heavenly light; and the closed access to the holiest sanctuary of God, which the earthly temple prefigured, was open to men. When the by-standers beheld the commotion in nature, a vague feeling led them to the just idea, that this was connected with the crucified one. The Roman centurion himself declared, that this must indeed be the Son of God. A shuddering feeling seized the remainder of the crowd, whom mere idle curiosity had led to see the

crucifixion; they beat their breasts and turned away; they knew not, that they had seen what angels desired to look into.

But Matthew in anticipation introduces a very remarkable statement; he states, that not only were the graves (in the rocks) opened by the earthquake, but many saints arose, and (subsequently) went into the holy city, and appeared to many. The only view, except the literal historic one, that can be taken of this relation is the mythic view; for what is called the *naturalist* view, which connects the loss of some bodies, which the earthquake cast out of their graves with some accidental dreams of some citizens of Jerusalem, is so faulty, as to need no refutation. The mythic view seems very plausible in regard to so extraordinary an event, and it is therefore not to be wondered at, that the numerous opposers of the bodily resurrection of Jesus are inclined to it. But in this case, as in general, the close proximity of time, which does not allow us to believe in the formation of mythic or symbolic fables in presence of contemporaries,

forbids our adopting this view ; yet the defenders of this opinion may take shelter behind Matthew in regard to this point, and may join with the many, who would make us think, that the gospel of Matthew, as we possess it, was not composed by the Apostle. But improbable as this latter idea appears, we may grant its truth and still maintain a distinct ground against the mythic view of the passage under consideration. The statement in this passage is against all analogy, and against the universally received standard of faith ; Christ is always considered as "the first-born of the dead," which is entirely at variance with this passage : the mythists would undoubtedly have placed this event after the account of the Lord's resurrection, and not in the narrative of his death. If the resurrection was now merely to be made apparent to Christian consciousness, then this event only expresses the simple thought that the resurrection followed gradually, and that the Saints of the old covenant came to be glorified in the body. The difficulty, so often

considered, of the connexion of these risen saints with Christ the first-born of the dead would then be set aside, by placing the going forth from their graves immediately after the Lord's resurrection. According to this view, the death of Christ appears an universal, astounding blow, but the resurrection appears as the peculiar life-quicken- ing for the slumbering world of Saints. This first coming of the Lord has by this event a peculiar beauty, for it thus be- comes a prefiguring of that glorious com- ing of the Lord, which is still to be expect- ed. All, that shall take place in the great development at the last day, is significantly indicated by the first coming of Christ.

SECTION VI.

BURIAL OF JESUS.

(Matt. xxvii. 57 - 66; Mark xv. 42 - 47; Luke xxiii. 50 - 56; John xix. 31 - 42.)

AFTER the soul of Jesus had left the pure temple of its habitation, his holy body was not left neglected, as if it were the insignificant veil of a heavenly phantom, but a wondrous influence of God hovered over it, and kept away every offensive mutilation. John, conscious of the importance of these particulars, has carefully related every incident. In these statements we have not only an assurance, as satisfactory as is possible on physical grounds, for the real death of Christ, but also a proof of the importance, which the bodily organization holds in the Christian system. Christianity is far from that comfortless view, which considers the body as the prison of the human spirit, and which leads to monkish asceticism; and it is

just as far removed from that empty notion, that sin came merely from the charms of sensuality, and hence the soul falls into death together with the body — a view, which favors Epicureanism. The Gospel considers it as the object of the union of the soul with the body, to glorify the latter into a temple of the Holy Spirit, so that the saying of a spiritual natural philosopher is thoroughly biblical; “without body, no soul, without embodiment, no salvation.”

According to the Jewish usage, the bodies of those executed must be removed on the day of their death. Since it was now the preparation day before the Sabbath, the Jews commanded that those crucified should be put to death. It was customary to hasten the death of the crucified, who were generally persons of the meanest condition, by breaking their limbs with clubs, a single blow of which upon the breast ended the unhappy being's sorrows. Pilate probably sent a separate detachment of soldiers for this purpose; these performed their office upon the two thieves; but when they came

to Jesus, (whom they therefore had not seen expire,) they found him already dead. In order to be sure of his death, one of these soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and blood and water flowed forth. They did not otherwise touch him, so that his body, by a remarkable conjunction of circumstances, was preserved without mutilation. John was an eye witness of this occurrence. With the strongest emphasis he gives assurance of the truth of what he relates, with the view of thereby impressing faith upon the minds of the readers. He also quotes two passages from the Old Testament, which point to these events. *A bone of him shall not be broken. Then shall they look on him whom they pierced..*

We now ask, why it was, that John lays so much weight upon this fact. It may indeed be believed, that this was intended to serve as a proof of the actual death of Christ, as it has been regarded in modern times; but we find no evidence, that the reality of Christ's death was doubted in the ancient Church, and this view is not there-

fore according to the sense of Christian antiquity. It is far more probable, that this statement of John had reference to the Gnostic sect of Docetæ, and was intended to establish the reality of the bodily nature of Christ, in opposition to the doctrine, that he was only a spiritual appearance. The remarkable manner, in which John treats symbolically of the blood and water, which flowed from the wound in Christ's side, will be considered, when we treat of the first Epistle of John. The question now is, what does the passage before us declare? Since men have begun to doubt, whether our Lord actually died upon the cross, it has been usual to insist upon John's statement in order to prove, that the point of the spear which reached the heart of Christ and the pericardium, which is filled with water, must actually have killed Jesus, had he not yet expired. So much is clear, that it was the soldier's design to kill him by the blow, in case that he had only swooned. But it is certainly more advisable not to make so important an inquiry, as that relating to

Christ's real death, depend on outward events, which, by a skeptical mind, may be viewed now in this way, now in that. Since the fact of death cannot be proved from outward marks, we must resort for proof to the inner grounds, which will have a more particular consideration in the history of the resurrection. We content ourselves with remarking, that it must be considered a peculiar mark of the divine influence, that the Saviour's heart should be opened, and the fountains of blood in his hands and feet be pierced, without the organization of his body being destroyed or dismembered.

Here the Synopsists mention the exertions of some distinguished friends of Jesus, in regard to his body. John mentions Nicodemus, the same who formerly sought Jesus by night; but the principal personage was Joseph of Arimathea. This worthy man was a disciple of Jesus, but the fear of man had hindered his openly avowing his faith. But what he had not been willing to do for the living, he was willing to do for the dead. He asked of Pilate the body of

Jesus. After Pilate had learned from the centurion, who had been commissioned to hasten the death of the crucified, that Jesus was dead, he gave his body to Joseph. After Joseph had obtained the precious gift, he wrapped the body of Jesus in a linen robe with spices, and placed it in a new sepulchre in his garden, and rolled a stone before it. It seems to be stated as something honorable, that the grave was new and unoccupied; it was probably his family sepulchre, which Joseph devoted to the body of Jesus. The whole proceeding took place in haste, since the Sabbath was approaching. Meanwhile some of the anxious women, who had followed their beloved Master faithfully from Galilee, yet followed him to the grave, where they, overcome with sorrow, bowed down to satisfy themselves by seeing how his body was placed. Upon their return, they provided precious ointments, in order after Sabbath to prepare the beloved body for its final rest. On the Sabbath day they abstained from labor, according to the injunction of the Mosaic law. The graves of the

Jews were hewn in the rock ; a block of stone closed the door or horizontal entrance.

For the friends of our Lord, this Sabbath, now coming on, was a day of peace, after the agony and strife of the preceding days ; but the enemies of Christ did not rest ; anguish of conscience again struck the heart of Pilate. They told him of the prediction of the resurrection, and demanded a watch until the third day. What feelings must have thrilled through Pilate at this communication, may be judged from the fact, that he was so deeply moved, when he heard that Jesus called himself the Son of God. Perhaps he gave permission the more readily, in order to have surer news of what should transpire. A return from the dead was certainly in *theory* the most improbable thing to him ; but often the Divinity so presses into the skeptical mind, by way of the heart, that the most skeptical often becomes very superstitious, while the inextinguishable feeling of the reality of the unseen world prevails in opposition to his theory. Modern

critics have disputed the fact, that a watch of Roman soldiers was placed around our Lord's grave, and have sought to impugn the authority of the passage in Matthew, which states this circumstance. But all these attempts appear without justification in truth. Matthew, who as an eye witness at Jerusalem at a time in which many persons lived, who had known the fact, could not give an entirely false account of so public an occurrence.

PART SECOND.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST.

(Matt. xxviii. ; Mark xv. ; Luke xxiv. ; John xx., xxi.)

As death and the shedding of blood were essential parts of our Lord's work of salvation, so must death necessarily be overcome by a subsequent resurrection. So that death and resurrection represent the two halves of his united work, the negative, as well as the positive. It is accordingly evident, that the resurrection represents an essential point in the development of the sublime life of the Saviour, and it is thus, that the history of the apostolic church represents it. The resurrection was the one great fact, which the Apostles felt themselves peculiarly bound to declare. After the as-

cension and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the day of the Pentecost, which were the first acts of the glorified Saviour, the disciples, who, a few days before at the arrest of Jesus, appeared so weak, now appear thoroughly settled in mind, and fully armed with unconquerable boldness, and also with wisdom, peace, serenity. The rise of the Christian Church is an incontrovertible, actual proof, that a great and astonishing event must have taken place, which could give rise to so persevering a zeal for such an undertaking.

But this importance attaches to the resurrection, chiefly, if we establish the fact that the Saviour did not rise with the *mortal* body, which he bore before the resurrection. If we consider the resurrection, as many well-meaning people do, and suppose the actually dead Saviour was restored to life by an act of the almighty power, without any change taking place in his body, it cannot be shown wherein the weight of this fact lies; the raising of Lazarus was just such an event according to this view, and

Paul could not justly have represented Christ's resurrection, as the foundation of faith, as the seal of the victory over death and the grave, if the body of Christ were still no more than mortal.

The defenders of this view are accustomed to consider the ascension, as the period of the glorification of the Saviour's body and of the victory over death; but this cannot be, because the Apostles universally consider the ascension only a consequence of the resurrection, which last was for them the great essential fact. Certainly this mode of viewing the resurrection, which Tholuck maintains, could not be entertained for a moment, if the statements regarding the appearances of the risen Saviour did not seem to speak for its authenticity. By these it appears, that the Lord had a body of flesh and bone, that he still bore the mark of the wounds, that he took food, and that his frame in all respects appeared like a common earthly body. These expressions and statements do not seem to be suited to a glorified body. But important as these remarks

at first sight appear, a more careful examination shows their fallacy.

In the first place we must remember, that the *spiritual body* is not to be confounded with *spirit* itself. According to the express representation of the Apostle Paul, the natural body became by the resurrection a spiritual body, but yet remained a true body. We must moreover consider, that the body of Christ from his very birth, although so similar to our own, was in many respects different from ours, and therefore the change, which it went through in the process of glorification, becomes less surprising; and thus, on the one hand, it is explained how the disciples were able to recognise him and observe the marks of the wounds, and, on the other hand, that they observed so great a change in him, as often not to know him. This view gains more weight, if we consider, that the process of glorification continued through forty days, and was first entirely completed upon the ascension. Finally, we are not to consider the remark in the Passion History regarding our Lord's

taking food, as implying any need of it, but merely as intended to convince those present of the reality of his body. Besides it is supposed in scripture (Rev. xxii.) that the glorified body takes food, but the physical process is expressly excluded. (1 Corinthians vi. 13.)

The difficulties therefore, which attach to the opinion of the glorification of the Lord's body by the resurrection, may be set aside, and are not of such a character, as to lead us away from the essential point in this event, that the Saviour must have risen with the impossibility of dying again, which could take place only by the glorification of his body. A very different view is held by those, who are not merely in doubt as to the precise moment of the glorification, but who mistrust, if they do not deny, the resurrection itself. Modern philosophy, alas! in its prevailing idealism, has not been able to acknowledge the idea of a glorification of body and of matter in general; only a few men, who have been as much distinguished for naturalists, as philosophers, like Schubert

in Munich, and Steffen in Breslau, have profoundly recognised the truth and importance of this idea. The Holy Scriptures know nothing of that dualism, which insists upon an absolute separation of spirit and matter. As spirit appears in man united with matter, it is apparent, that the former can defile or consecrate the latter, and in fine can glorify it. Instead of acknowledging this very striking idea, and examining into it by their speculative penetration, many have attempted to place the whole concern in the realm of mythic parable, and to interpret the language of the passage in the Gospel, as expressing symbolically the idea of a return from the world of spirit. But the plain narratives of the Evangelists, which originated in a period purely historical, and were composed by eye witnesses, stand in most decided contrast with the mythic theory.

After these observations, that view is yet to be examined, which does not put a peculiar meaning upon the resurrection, so much as plainly deny it. One class of the defend-

ers of this view, (Dr. Paulus and Henneburg,) hold to the fact, but see in the resurrection nothing but a recovery from a swoon. According to the view first touched upon, which supposed Jesus to have risen with his mortal body, this last opinion is with great difficulty refuted on mere external grounds; for the medical proof of the reality of the death of Christ, even from the wounds, which the spear inflicted, is at the least not imperative. But, on the contrary, according to our view, this hypothesis of Paulus has not the slightest consequence. Since, even supposing the Saviour only apparently dead, this does not change the import of the event; since this importance does not depend on the mere return to life, (this has taken place in regard to others, without any such great weight being laid upon their case,) but on the glorification of body attending that return, and on the consequent impossibility of again dying. This, our view, supposes a peculiar influence of the Deity to have been exercised in the resurrection, and cannot be eluded by the

untenable hypothesis of an apparent death. Setting aside all uncertain medical proof, we have, besides these, in the predictions of Christ before his death, a foundation, that cannot be shaken, upon which to rest our conviction of the reality of his death. As in the case of Lazarus, and all the other dead, who were raised, we have only the word of Christ to assure us, that they were dead, since he openly declares, that they were merely asleep, in instances where death had not ensued; so in regard to Christ's resurrection, his word is the only sure testimony, the only firm rock, on which the certainty rests; *He was dead, and is again made alive.* (Rev. i. 18.)

No effort indeed has been wanting in the attempt to remove the clear unequivocal declarations of Jesus of his approaching death and resurrection. But the grounds, upon which they have sought to make it probable, that these expressions were placed in our Lord's mouth by the disciples after the event, are so weak, that nothing but the earnest conviction, that, in this way alone,

the great fact itself can be made doubtful, could persuade those engaged in such attempts to attach any importance to them.

It only remains to touch upon the view, which has been so noised abroad, by those who use the contradictions between the four Evangelists to show a falsehood in the whole affair. But the narration would be far more liable to suspicion on this ground, if it were entirely devoid of contradictions in unimportant particulars, than at present, where there is some deviation in collateral particulars, and perfect coincidence in the great essential points. Even if the contradictions were irreconcilable, this would not impair the credibility of the essentials of the narration. But the explanation of a single one will prove, that the differences are but independent statements of the same proceedings, and such as always must occur, where several independent witnesses testify of the same event.

SECTION I.

HISTORY OF THE RESURRECTION.

(Matt. xxviii. 1 - 15 ; Mark xvi. 1 - 11 ; Luke xxiv. 1 - 12 ; John xx. 1 - 18.)

THE act of the resurrection itself, like every new process of creation, is veiled in obscurity. The writers of the New Testament merely state what they saw, after the grave had become empty. Silent and unobserved, the creative energy did its work, and hovered around the person of the Lord, like a heavenly robe of light, worthy to array the king of the world of light. While the Lord was resting from his labor upon that great Sabbath, his friends, both male and female, passed the day in hallowed communion, still thinking they had lost the beloved of their soul. But this error, according to which they must have concluded, that Jesus was not the Messiah, did not de-

prive them of their love. They hastened, at early day break, to finish the anointing of the Lord's body.

In the description of the approach of the women to the grave, some remarkable differences between the Evangelists present themselves. As to the Synopsists, or Matthew, Mark, and Luke, they, on the whole, coincide. Mary Magdalene, and Mary, the wife of Cleopas, (Luke speaks of Joanna, the wife of Chusa, and Mark introduces Salome,) go with spices to the grave at sunrise. On the way they talk of the difficulty of removing the stone from the grave. But when they approached, they see the stone already moved away, and behold an angel near the grave. (Here Luke first differs from Matthew and Mark, in naming two angels, while they name but one.) These angels address the women, inform them of the resurrection, and charge them to make it known to the disciples. (Mark states, "neither said they anything to any one.") Here Luke breaks in, and says, that the disciples did not believe the report of the

women, while Peter hastened to the grave. But the two others add, that Christ himself appeared; Matthew observes that he met the women returning; Mark speaks only of Mary Magdalene, without stating that she had separated from the other women. If we had only these accounts of the Synopsists, the relation might be regarded as being entirely harmonious. As to the number of angels, it is easy for him, who wishes unanimity in such minute particulars, to suppose that Matthew and Mark spoke only of the angel who addressed the women, but Luke made mention of both heavenly messengers. The expression of Mark also, "they said nothing to any one," may be easily reconciled by limiting its application to that immediate moment — a meaning, which, the following remark, "for they were afraid," plainly sanctions. The departure of Mark from the other Evangelists, who mentions only Mary Magdalene, and remarks that Jesus first appeared to her, seems most important. But if we had not the narrative of John, this difference would not be essen-

tial, since we may consider Mary to have withdrawn from the other women without any mention being made of it, and thus may reconcile the seeming contradiction. But the whole matter is entirely changed *when we compare the narrations of the Synopsists with the statement of John*. According to the latter, Mary Magdalene went alone, while it was yet dark, to the grave. When she found the stone rolled away, she hurried back to Peter and John, and expressed to them her anxiety, lest the body had been stolen away. Hereupon both these hastened to the grave; John arrived first, but Peter ventured before him to enter the grave. After they had convinced themselves, that the body of the Lord was not there, they returned; but Mary remained by the grave weeping, and as she sat there, she saw two angels, and soon after Jesus himself, whereupon she hastened back to the disciples, and told them what they had seen. Upon first sight, there appears no resemblance between this statement and that of the Synopsists; only in the cursory

observation (Luke xxiv. 12) about Peter, who entered the grave, there is an agreement with John's record, and also in the statement of Mark, that Jesus appeared first to Mary. But upon a more full consideration, it is manifest, that this apparently great discrepancy is resolved into a perfect harmony, and the statements bear such a relation to each other, as must always be the case, when several persons speak of the same event, according to what they have seen. Even the accounts, which various witnesses give of present events, are almost always different, since each must see differently, according as he looks from a different point of view. Griesbach and Hess have already formed the following harmony of the Evangelists in opposition to those unphilosophical objections, which have been raised against the truth of the resurrection on account of these discrepancies.

The narrations of the Synopsists form two courses of events connected with each other; John tells merely what he experienced, the Synopsists learned what they

relate probably from the women. By the simple supposition, that Mary Magdalene separated from the other women, came first to the grave, and then called Peter and John, the parallel character of the two narratives becomes clear and evident. The course of the events is then as follows. Early in the morning, Mary Magdalene and the other women go to the grave together, but Mary outstripped her companions, and found the grave empty to her great astonishment. Immediately Mary hastens to Peter and John, and meanwhile the other women arrive, see the angels, and hear their words. After their withdrawal, Mary returns with the two disciples; after they look into the grave, they return to the house, but Mary still remains at the grave weeping, and hereupon the angels appear to her and then the Lord himself. After this appearance to Mary alone, the Saviour revealed himself to the heart-stricken women, on their way back. By this view, all contradictions disappear; there is but one difficulty remaining how it is, if the events

were so near each other, that Mark could so expressly and decidedly declare, that the Lord appeared first to Mary; the other women saw him about the same time, only a very little later, so little, that it was not to be peculiarly remarked that he appeared first to Mary. If we consider, that here Mark departs from Matthew, and that the latter only relates, that Jesus showed himself to the returning women, it then appears in regard to this point more likely, that Matthew has somewhat unsatisfactorily extended, to all the women, Christ's appearance to Mary alone. But this discrepancy is so trifling, that it only serves to confirm the freedom and independence of the Evangelists, whose statements are satisfactory in all important points.

The day in which the women went to the grave is declared unanimously by the Evangelists, to have been the first day of the week, or Sunday. According to Matthew and Mark, the women were told to inform the disciples, that Jesus would meet them in Galilee. The purpose of this direc-

tion was doubtless, none else, than the Lord's idea, that the retirement of Galilee would be a more appropriate place for the disciples to receive his last charge, than the tumultuous city of Jerusalem. The first appearances of the Lord were only intended to convince the disciples, that he had arisen. Mark mentions the appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene, with the remark, that he had cured her of seven devils. This takes away our surprise, that the gracious Saviour should reveal himself first to the poor and miserable, who had most needed his aid, and who by receiving it had been most inflamed with love for him. But the disciples were so utterly deprived of their presence of mind by Christ's death, that they could give no credence to the glad tidings of his resurrection, of which he had so often forewarned them.

When Peter and John looked into the grave and found it empty, their first impulse probably was to believe, like Mary, that the body had been stolen away. But when they saw no marks of violence, but the grave clothes

lying in perfect order, they probably believed in the Lord's resurrection. At least John believed.

When Mary sat weeping by the tomb and saw the angels, and soon after the Lord, she did not probably recognise them as such. She certainly did not recognise the Lord, but seeing him in the garden she mistook him for the gardener. This might have been because it was not yet fully light, but more probably because she did not expect to see any one there but the gardener.

Our Lord's remark to Mary, "Touch me not, for I have not ascended to my Father," has led to much discussion, and received many and various interpretations. Chrysostom, and Augustine, whose view has been adopted by Calvin and Beza, consider the passage to mean, "Do not concern yourself with my earthly appearance, since I shall be exalted into a heavenly." Others consider the word "*touch*," as referring to Mary's homage; pray not to me now, for I am not a heavenly being. Schleiermacher's view of the passage appears to me the right one.

“ Do not think of delaying me here, my course is onward, my glorification is not finished, I am not ascended to my Father.”

There appears something repulsive in this remark, and therefore the Lord takes away this impression by the loving message to the disciples ; “ I ascend unto your Father and my Father ; and to my God and your God.”

As I have been as you are, you shall become as I am, by a new birth, true children of God, my brethren !

SECTION II.

FURTHER APPEARANCES OF CHRIST ON
THE DAY OF RESURRECTION.

(Luke xxiv. 13-43; Mark xvi. 12-14; John
xx. 19-29.)

OUR Lord would according to his promise probably have shown himself to his disciples only in the quiet retirement of Galilee, if they could have thus attained a living faith in the resurrection; but the statements of the women, first thought worthy to see the Saviour, did not suffice to raise in the disciples a faith, that could not be shaken. John may have been the only one, who was convinced by Mary's story. After the first day, the risen Saviour seems to have appeared to the disciples no more in Jerusalem; the other known appearances probably took place in Galilee. Yet in order to have as

satisfactory an idea of the communication of our Lord with his disciples, as the documents at hand will allow, we must consider more closely the several difficulties which present themselves in this department of Evangelical history.

The first question that presents itself is, whether the Evangelists have recorded all the appearances of our Lord, or whether they were far more numerous, than we are told. If we consider 1 Corinthians xv. 6, &c., we find the Apostle mentions some appearances of Jesus, of which the Evangelists say nothing, that is, those, which Peter and John beheld. But the omission in the Evangelists is very easily explained on the ground, that the Saviour appeared to these two disciples for purposes, that were merely individual. He appeared to Peter probably on account of his denial, and to James (the brother of the Lord) because he had not always believed in Jesus. Both appearances had an individual aim, and therefore did not possess an universal interest.

Besides these two, Paul mentions another

appearance of Christ, which occurred to upwards of five hundred of the brethren, many of whom were alive, when Paul wrote. We may remark in passing, that no trifling proof of the reality of the resurrection is given by these numerous witnesses. But this appearance is probably the same, as that which the Synopsists mention, as having taken place in Galilee. It is highly probable to me, that no farther appearances occurred, than those of which we have information. Jesus showed himself, as he had promised, only to his disciples, and even to them very seldom. His communication with his disciples therefore bears a peculiar character. To the Pharisees, and all who had not decidedly turned towards Jesus, his resurrection was but a sign of Jonas, unintelligible and dark. Our Lord could not reveal himself in his majesty to them, since if they had again resisted him, their guilt would have been heightened, and even if they had gone over to him, it is evident, that such a change of opinion would not have been real and heartfelt, but only induced by fear. But if any

one was led by the influence of the risen Saviour to give honor to the truth, without having seen him, it is to be supposed that such an one had turned towards the light with his inward being. Nothing would have been gained therefore by our Lord's appearing to all or any of his enemies.

But as to the disciples, they had sufficiently enjoyed the constant company of their Lord; it only remained for Jesus to give them the final instruction and consecration in order to form them into perfect instruments for building up the Kingdom of God. Hence the Lord appeared to them after the resurrection only at a few hallowed seasons, in an imposing and mysterious manner. We may perceive, that the disciples were seized with a secret awe, when they saw the Saviour, which is strangely mingled with their joy in possessing the beloved of their soul. Yet they knew that they possessed him in a different manner, for when the Saviour left them at the ascension, they were full of joy, and by no means sorrowful as before, since they knew, that Christ was

still with them in spirit and was exalted to God's right hand.

On account of obscure notions of the life of the risen Lord, it has been asked in modern times, (since ancient Christendom had too just views of the resurrection to ask such questions,) where was the Lord, and how was he nourished in the interval between his resurrection and ascension? But if we consider, that the Saviour, even before his resurrection, walked over the waves of the sea, and fed thousands with a few loaves, we shall be convinced, that the glorified Redeemer was now still less bound by physical laws, and that therefore human wants and necessities had no application to the nature of the glorified One.

The first of Christ's appearances, on the day of resurrection, is that which Luke particularly relates, and to which Mark briefly refers. Two disciples, the name of one of whom was Cleopas, were walking towards Emmaus in the afternoon. This Emmaus, according to Josephus, was a little village a Sabbath day's journey from Jeru-

saalem, and is not to be confounded with a town of the same name, which was twenty miles distant from Jerusalem, and which was afterwards called Nicopolis. They were conversing upon the events of the preceding days, when Jesus joined them, without being recognised. Luke says, that their eyes were holden, that they could not see him, but Mark relates, that Jesus appeared in another form. We may accept both remarks, and believe that the Lord veiled himself from them, and their eyes were holden. It is utterly unscriptural to refer the disfiguration to the effect of pain and trouble; it is rather to be supposed, that the peculiar appearance consisted partly in the glorified state, and was partly designed. It is a harder question to decide, why did the Lord conceal himself, and why, as soon as recognised, did he withdraw? The cause probably lay in the state of the disciples' mind; they seem to have been wholly wrong regarding the Messiahship of Christ, and needed therefore some strong confirmation of their faith. The Saviour gave them this, while he explained to

them the scriptural doctrine concerning the Messiah's atoning death. Had Jesus made himself known before he had convinced them by weight of scriptural evidence, his appearance would have so overcome them, as to disturb the power of calm understanding. Therefore after the main object had been gained, he revealed his person. The Saviour began his conversation with them by asking the cause of their sadness. Cleopas replied, and mentioned the great events of the preceding days. The doubts they show as to Christ's being the Messiah, who was to deliver Israel, do not imply they doubted his prophetic character. Many of the prophets had died ; and Christ's death, while it destroyed their hopes of his being the restorer of Israel, did not destroy their faith in his prophetic dignity. In their minds, the words, *redeemed Israel*, had a very narrow, perhaps partly a political sense. The words, which follow in Luke, allude to the rumors of the resurrection, to which however these disciples would not assent. Their words confirm the two occurrences

with the women, which the Synopsists relate, and with Peter and John, which the latter relates, and this testimony is all the more important, since it cannot have been introduced designedly into the relation of Luke, for he does speak of what occurred to Peter and John on the day of resurrection.

To this lamentation of the disciples, the Lord addresses language both of rebuke and consolation. He immediately blames the insensibility of the two disciples to the predictions, so clearly made by the prophets. Then he adduces particular passages of scripture regarding himself, and explains them. The sufferings of the Messiah are shown to be necessarily connected with his whole mission and his glory. This sacred necessity was expressed in the prophets of the Old Testament ; they refer to the death, as well as to the resurrection of the Lord. The Saviour now wished to withdraw, since his object was attained, but his words must have filled their hearts with the wondrous power of love ; they could not part from

the beloved stranger. He therefore went in with them, and revealed himself while in the act of breaking bread, and immediately disappeared from their sight. Hereupon the disciples hastened away to the place of meeting of the Apostles, where they were met by the news, that the Lord had appeared to Peter, which they returned with an account of what they had experienced.

Hardly had the two disciples entered the assembly, when the Lord himself stood in their midst. In the account of this appearance, Luke and John mutually help each other out. The last describes principally the scene, of which Luke says nothing, while the latter insists particularly upon the reality of the Lord's body, to which the former only alludes. As to the place of assembly, John relates that the doors were closed from fear of the Jews. There is evidently something wonderful in Christ's entering, while the doors were closed. Upon the Lord's entrance and the salutation, "peace be unto you," a holy calm must have pervaded the disciples, and they felt them-

selves to be in the immediate presence of the Holy One; and hence then the suspicion, that it might be a spirit in the form of Jesus. The idea of a spirit may have been as obscure to the Apostles, as that of ghost is with us, while they both refer to a bodiless apparition. This Docetic delusion must be removed by the Lord. The essence of the resurrection did not consist in the return of the spiritual principle, but in the renewal of bodily life. Because the Saviour, in proof of the reality of his body, showed them his hands and feet, and finally ate before them; it cannot be justly argued, as has been before said, that the body could not have been glorified, for the glorified body is still a body. But the eating is not to be regarded, as springing from real want, but merely as a mode of proving the reality of his body. The ground, which many highly estimable theologians take in explaining such passages, so as to deny that the body of Christ was raised in a glorified state, consists in the fact, that they do not believe in a glorification of the corporeal nature,

but maintain a complete annihilation of it by the spirit. The extreme tendency of our times to idealize, leads to this view, so decidedly opposed to the Holy Scriptures.

The passage, that follows, is highly characteristic, and wrung from the very depths of human feeling. The disciples rejoiced, and dared not really believe, it was the true Jesus, whom they saw before them. Man has a secret horror of everything purely spiritual, everything devoid of a corporeal dwelling. But as soon as they were convinced of its bodily reality, the apparition became to them, for the first time, dear and precious, and a source of blessed joy. John does not mention this transaction, because he wished to tell the same event more explicitly concerning Thomas, and communicates instead of it another occurrence very remarkable. He relates, that the Lord again exclaimed, "Peace be with you!" then reminded them of their mission, and breathing upon them said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." In these and the words which follow, the installation of the Apostles and

the bestowal of their exalted prerogative are repeated. That something of this kind went forth from the risen Lord, seems in the highest degree probable, since the disciples were to be confirmed by him anew, as had been promised before, but this occasion seems little suited to the day of resurrection, since Thomas was absent at the time, and yet was not to be excluded from the college of Apostles. It appears far more suitable, that such a consecration should be repeated at the end of the forty days, since the renewal of the election of the Apostles would stand out, as a majestic closing event. The accounts of the Synopsists, regarding the last commands of Jesus, would well accord with such an idea, by which they were authorized anew, as his messengers. I am almost inclined in this place to suppose, (what may also appear from the Synopsists,) that John briefly recounts and attributes to this appearance something, which occurred subsequently. The following account about Thomas is not opposed to this, since it is evidently but a supplementary relation, intended to

show how this disciple was led to believe in the resurrection of Christ. In the twentieth chapter, thirtieth verse, John closes his Gospel, since the last chapter or the twenty-first is a later addition. Besides I consider Tholuck's view of the words, *receive the Holy Ghost*, quite untenable, which refers the outpouring of the spirit expected to the day of Pentecost. The symbolic act of breathing would be idle, were it not attended by an actual influence of the spirit. The communication of the spirit to the disciples, is to be considered as in gradual progression; as the disciples already on their first mission received new spiritual powers, so the Lord increased these, until on the day of Pentecost, the fulness of the spirit was poured out. With the possession of the spirit, the power to forgive and not forgive or to retain sins, was immediately united, because in the nature of the spirit, those conditions inhered, by which such power could be alone explicable and secure from abuse. The symbolic act of breathing is not again met with in the New Testament,

but it is plainly connected with the idea of spirit, which in the Greek is expressed by the same word as breath, from which in all languages, the phrases expressive of spiritual communications are derived.

It has already been stated in the beginning of this section, that probably all later appearances of Christ did not take place in Jerusalem. I attribute to that place, however, the apparition, which occurred to Thomas eight days after the resurrection. John mentions this less on its own account, than for the sake of explaining the circumstance of the previous absence of Thomas. At the same time, the minute description of John, how Thomas was convinced of the reality of the Lord's body, must have some reference to those of John's readers, who were inclined to the Docetic heresy, and would hardly believe in the Lord's real humanity. It has often been remarked, that Thomas shows the supremacy of the reflecting understanding, so that he may be called the Rationalist among the Apostles. To such persons, the actual reception of Divine influence is usually very

difficult, since in them the active spiritual power is accustomed to exercise supremacy over the receptive faculty, and to lead the mind to seek correct ideas about Divine things, rather than their actual possession. But if the Divine power actually takes effect in their soul, then the edifice of opinions raised by the understanding is forcibly thrown down, and the recognition of a higher principle is expressed in all the boldness of faith. Thus when Thomas was convinced, he exclaimed, "My Lord and my God." Many as the attempts have been to interpret these words of Thomas, as a mere ejaculation, without any doctrinal meaning, yet all these attempts must go to wreck together upon the grammatical connexion, and upon the psychological aspect of the character of Thomas. That the name of God, as is common with us, should be employed by the Jews as a mere exclamation, is utterly inexplicable, and on account of the strictness of their law, incredible; they would have regarded it as a transgression of the command, "Thou shalt not take the name

of thy God in vain." The expression, "he said to him," declares a reference to the person of Christ, and it only remains for us to believe that Thomas called Jesus God. Tholuck observes in regard to this, that Thomas applied to Jesus a term, which expressed more, than he would have said in a season of calm reflection. Were such a remark to be applied to the former disposition of Thomas, I would willingly agree to it. But to apply it to his subsequent condition, as if he had said too much in a moment of excited feeling, is altogether unphilosophical. Natures like that of Thomas, when the heavenly influence had once overcome them, would be the more firmly convinced of its power, in proportion to the very resistance with which they had before opposed it. We must therefore regard this occasion of the manifestation of Christ, as the moment, when Thomas was entirely illumined by the Divine light, renewed in the very depths of his being, so that the Lord revealed himself not only outwardly, but inwardly, and in all his Divine majesty. The appearances of Jesus

had thus the most exalted consequences; in Peter, James, and Thomas, they finished the renewal and regeneration, that had already been gradually advancing within them. As to their effect upon these disciples, they stand parallel to the appearance of Christ, which occurred to Paul on his way to Damascus. The reply of Jesus confirmed the yielding conviction, which the Apostles entertained of the event, while it reminded him, that his doubt originated in sin, namely, from the one-sided predominance of one faculty, the critical understanding, by which the sensibility to Divine influence was limited.

SECTION III.

CLOSING VERSES OF THE FOUR GOSPELS.

(Matt. xxviii. 16-20; Mark xv. 16-20; Luke xxiv. 44-53; John xx. 30, 31.)

If we compare the endings of the four Gospels, we find that they end in a certain indefiniteness. Matthew (xxviii. 16,) expressly states, that the Lord, as he promised, appeared to his disciples in Galilee. But since there is no mention made of the ascension, it remains in the dark, what the connexion is between the remarks, that are attributed to Jesus upon this appearance, which seem like his parting words, with the great closing act of our Lord's earthly life. Mark briefly mentions the ascension, and has in the verses immediately proceeding, (xvi. 15, 18,) elements of sayings, which

are closely related to the close of Matthew. But these are so loosely introduced by the transition, "and he said unto them," that we may believe, that the Saviour spoke these on the evening of the resurrection. In Luke also, there is a separate account of the ascension, but the passages (44 - 49) are so loosely connected with the preceding statement, that it remains doubtful whether the words, that follow, were spoken at the final appearance or not. Finally John, after his story of Thomas, closes his Gospel with a remark of universal application, (we are to consider chapter xxi. as a later addition to his treatise.) In his Gospel therefore, those parting words are lacking, as the other Evangelists have them, since the statements, in chapter xxi., contain nothing of those, but merely touch upon personalities, which chiefly relate to Peter.

The fact of these various endings of the Gospels demands a solution, because it is very surprising; we should naturally believe, that the Evangelists are bound to relate the history of the risen Saviour with the utmost

particularity, since every appearance and everything connected with it must be a witness of the truth of the resurrection. Instead of this, they speak so generally, and vaguely, that they do not clearly distinguish the several appearances from each other, and they leave it uncertain, whether the sayings, which they introduce, were spoken upon one or another occasion. But upon further consideration, we find a great truth is expressed by this mode of representation.

If we except those incidents, which were entirely of a personal application, such as occur in the appearances of Jesus to Thomas and Peter, there is the highest evidence of truth and harmony in regard to all the appearances of our Lord. The object of these was not to give any new doctrines, to unfold any new view of his office, but simply to strengthen the foundations already laid, by confirming the faith in the Saviour's person. The appearances were therefore few, and probably fleeting and transient. The Saviour points the disciples to the

Kingdom of God, to the prophecies of the Old Testament regarding his person, and to their destiny to promote the cause of God. The Evangelists accordingly, on account of the similarity of our Lord's several remarks, might very naturally alter the order of the various appearances, but they agree in stating the sayings of our Lord with entire conformity in the chief points.

Many critics have doubted the genuineness of the closing passage of Mark's Gospel, (xvi. 9 – 18,) and others have strenuously maintained it. But the fact of the omission of this passage in some manuscripts may be easily explained, and the connexion of the passage with the whole Gospel is such, as to make us maintain its genuineness even against the array of critical names, who deny it.

The incidents given in the closing verses, already quoted, have been in part already considered. Mark and Luke, however, speak briefly of the Lord's ascension. But the consideration of this subject belongs rather to interpretation of the Book of Acts.

In examining that book, we shall find, that our Lord's last appearance to his disciples was on the Mount of Olives. The Mount, that had beheld the depths of his agony, was the scene of his heavenly exaltation. In considering the ascension of Christ, we abide by the views of his glorified body already expressed, and must differ from those idealists, who reject the idea of the ascension of the body. The Lord's glorified body disappeared from the Apostles' gaze, and dwelt in the world of glory.

The closing passage in Matthew is remarkably significant, (xxviii. 16 – 20.) This Evangelist remarks in the outset, that the following words of the Lord were spoken at his promised appearing in Galilee, and upon a mountain. Tradition gives us nothing more satisfactory concerning the locality. Perhaps this appearance was the same with that recorded in Corinthians, in which he is said to have appeared to five hundred brethren at once. The words of Christ, which follow, seem indeed to have been directed to the twelve disciples, or at the most to the seven-

ty; but we may suppose, that in some passages of his remarks, he addressed himself particularly to those, who stood near him, as we know he sometimes did. There is no obstacle to prevent our identifying these two appearances, since the solemnity of the words seems adapted to an exalted occasion, which the large number of the company indicated, which probably comprised all, who at that time believed in the Lord. We can thus explain how it was possible, that many of those present still doubted. It is incredible that this was the case with the Apostles, but with those believers, who now saw the risen Lord for the first time, it might be as with the Apostles in the beginning.

In the fourteenth verse of the chapter of Matthew under consideration, the important event of the institution of the sacrament of Baptism is stated. The words directly relating to this, and standing in the middle, form as it were the kernel of the command; the words, which precede and follow, enclose the kernel. We will consider the latter first. They evidently misunderstand the passage,

who consider the command to teach, as referring to what was to take place before baptism, as if the sense were: "first teach, then baptize." The very construction of the sentence opposes this idea, for *baptizing* and *teaching*, are both participles, which follow the verb, *teach*. According to apostolic usage, moreover, teaching did not precede baptism; this rite ensued upon the simple confession of the name of Jesus, as the Christ. As soon as the believer became a member of the Church by Baptism, he participated in the instructions, which were given in the Church. The charge, *teaching them all things, whatsoever I have commanded you*, follows the charge as to baptizing.

All nations appear to be the object of this baptism. Here the Saviour takes his stand on the ground of broad universality, according to which the whole human race appears the subject of his reconciling work. Beneath his blessed influences from on high, the Lord would that all mankind should be quickened to spiritual life. But still his

church was not to remain merely a spiritual community, but also to have an external, visible form. This end was gained by instituting an outward rite, by which all his disciples should be consecrated. But that this comprehensive idea escaped the Apostles, is evident, from the history of Peter in the Acts, who was the first one, who was enlightened by the Spirit on the subject. The expression in Mark, which speaks of every *creature* as the subject of Gospel preaching, is to be considered as meaning the same, as all men, or every rational creature. Perhaps, however, we ought not to separate mankind so entirely from the rest of creation, as is commonly done. They, who do this, efface a deeply significant idea, which pervades the New Testament, that a glorification of all nature is connected with the gospel, a glorification, which proceeds from the human world, but is gradually to pervade all things.

The consideration of the form of Baptism itself now lies before us. It is in the outset plain, that the Lord would ordain a Church-

rite, permanent for all ages, by which Baptism, as well as instruction, is enjoined for all people. It follows from this, that Baptism; as established by our Lord, is essentially different from that of John, which had only a temporary importance. The Christian Sacrament of Baptism cannot be a mere Baptism of repentance, but the symbol of a regeneration, corresponding with the outward rite. Accordingly, as in John iii. 3, salvation is made to depend on regeneration, in the parallel passage, Mark xvi. 16, it is made to depend on Baptism, and the faith, implied by it. The opinion, that the rite is essential to the progress of regeneration, and that the outward form, originally accompanying this, may be lacking under some circumstances, is met by the last half of the verse, in which the baptized believer is contrasted with the unbeliever, and not with the unbaptized. By the introduction of Infant Baptism, which is surely not apostolic, but was necessary in the church, when the outpouring of spiritual powers ceased, the character of Baptism changed. The out-

ward rite then took the old position of John's Baptism, and received its full inward consummation by confirmation.

As to the sense of the phrase, *baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*; the passages in Corinthians, which speak of a baptism *into Moses*, and *into the name of Paul*, give the best idea. The being baptized in the name of any one, implies, that the rite brings with it a pledge or obligation to that person, and the exalted object to which Christian Baptism binds its subjects is even the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The unbaptized are hence regarded, as without actual connexion with God; this sinful alienation, which is the source of all outward and inward misery, is removed by baptism and regeneration. Divine influences unite with the human soul, and generate a higher and heavenly consciousness. It is here worthy of remark, that the objects, to which baptism pledges those who receive it, is called not merely God, but Father, Son and Spirit. This is the only passage in the

Gospels, in which the Lord mentions the three persons together. In many passages, however, the Saviour describes the Son, as well as the Holy Spirit, as Divine persons; but here they appear in company, and are termed together the exalted object, to whom believers are pledged by baptism. The established doctrine of the church is essentially biblical, only the symbolic expression, person, is somewhat improper, and liable to lead into error. Meanwhile human language affords no expression, by which unity of being with individuality of consciousness in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, can be expressed more fitly, and we cannot reproach the framers of the creed for the choice of this expression, but must rather accuse the poverty of human language, which is unable to indicate, by precise conceptions and adequate words, those highest and absolute relations, which can be truly represented only by the intuitions of the purified reason.

The error, to which the word, person, leads, but which all the more profound ecclesiastical scholars have contended against,

(especially Augustine, in his profound work on the Trinity,) is this. People are led by the phrase to think of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as locally or mechanically exterior to one another, while they should be regarded, as in living union with one another. In opposition to this error, it is very profitable to bring forward the true element in Sabellianism, which justly recognises this vital unity, without accepting that element of falsity, which consists in confounding the individual consciousness of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As an illustration of the unity of being, and difference of consciousness in God, we have a correspondent analogy in the spiritual nature of man, the image of God. As in man, not only spiritual existence, but also the consciousness of this existence is given, so also in the Divine Being, if we would consider it not as a dead idea, but as a living God, we suppose existence and knowledge of existence. This knowledge, or consciousness of God, is in itself the Son; in him the Father finds himself, and by him he works all that he

does. But as all the powers of the Father are concentrated, as it were, in the consciousness of self, so they return eternally from the Son to the original ground of the Father; and this return is the Holy Spirit. This explains the common usage of scripture; *The Father draws to the Son*, but, *The Son leads by the Holy Spirit back to the Father*. In the manifestation of the activity of Father, Son, and Spirit, a progression is thus represented. All Divine knowledge goes forth from the Father, as absolute power, through the Son, as perfect love, to the Holy Spirit, as perfect holiness. But otherwise considered, the Holy Spirit leads straightway back to the Father, so that the end again goes to the beginning and in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the eternal, timeless being of God is represented in his real inward motion. But if it seems dark, how the inward actions of the Divine Being can be regarded, as an *individual* consciousness, it is made clear by the fact, that the activities of *absolute* spirit, in the pure life of its nature, are being and consciousness;

but if we understand by the idea of individuality, a something isolated, and distinct from other spiritual life ; this would be an error, as has been already said, and the scriptures in their general modes of expression show, that they consider the Son and Spirit not as persons in such a sense of the term. The Son appears, actually individualized in the person of Jesus, but strives by regeneration to convert all humanity to himself and his own nature, wherefore the whole church is called merely Christ, (1 Corinthians xxi. 12,) and the Holy Spirit appears poured out in all the hearts of the faithful, as the Father, who is present in the whole Universe. Hence as the consciousness of God in itself can only be regarded as all-embracing, the idea of person, according to the sense of the doctrine of the Trinity, is to be taken in an all-comprehensive sense, by which a great part of the difficulties, that have been found on that account in the doctrine, is set aside.

In the consideration of this important passage, the question occurs, whether the

Lord in the words already quoted, intended to give a fixed form of Baptism or not. This question would not have arisen, if the other writers of the New Testament had shown, that these words were uniformly employed in administering the rite ; whereas, on the contrary, we find that often in the apostolic history, baptism is spoken of as administered in the name or into the name of Jesus or Christ. In the first place let us remember, that the act of baptism is never so prescribed, but only alluded to in the manner named. It cannot be hence inferred from the use of these phrases, the express form, before us, was not employed ; these phrases may merely indicate the baptism, as being Christian, in opposition to the baptism of John. We must moreover remember, that passages occur, in which the names of Son and Holy Spirit are employed in connexion with baptism, so as to render a reference to the form employed in baptism highly probable. Besides, the oldest Christian writers adduce the words of the passage before us, as the form of baptism. In es-

tablishing the Lord's Supper, as well as the rite of Baptism, the Saviour doubtless employed the words best adapted to indicate the spiritual character of the rites, and it became the duty of the church to retain these words, as the true sacramental forms. Yet in all outward matters, the primitive church was very free in its movements, and hence it might happen, that in some cases they would baptize merely in the name of Jesus. That this was actually the case, is obvious from the later controversies, which Cyprian had upon the subject of baptismal heresies. The Saviour finally confirms his command to the little band of his disciples, to impart a new life to the world, by the promise of his constant and all-powerful presence. *Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.*

In considering the close of John's twentieth chapter, if we compare it with the beginning of his gospel, it seems to bring his work excellently to an end. John beautifully closes with the history of Thomas and the remark, *blessed are they that have not*

seen and yet have believed, since herein lies a most forcible exhortation to the reader, to believe the testimony concerning him, who was full of grace and truth, without having seen him with bodily eyes. And to awake this faith, to spread the conviction, that Jesus was the Messiah, was the great and entire object of John, while the Word, which was life, imparted to him, through faith, the true life, and the disciple of love would make this blessed life accessible to his readers. In order to keep the minds of his readers open in future to the infinite riches of Christ's life, John signifies, that he has not told all, so that much still remains for their investigation, after it was stimulated by reading the account already given. The thirty-first verse expressly declares the main object of this Gospel. Its representation of Christ, as the Son of God, was considered in the primitive as its chief design, without its losing on this account its universal application. With this statement of his purpose, John fitly closes his work, in order to wake in the reader's mind, by this means,

a sense of the duty, which the knowledge of the coming of the promised One placed upon him.

SECTION IV.

APPENDIX TO THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

(John xxi. 1-25.)

THAT the last chapter of the Gospel of John, forms an appendix to the whole treatise, is so evident, and now so generally acknowledged, that it needs no further proof. But critics have not been able to agree, who should be regarded as the author of this appendix. Yet the idea seems to be more and more admitted, as the only result of the researches into this subject, that the two last verses only were not written by John, and that the remainder of the chapter was added to the treatise by its author after its completion.

The chapter, excepting the two last verses, (which are too hyperbolical for the style of John,) bears the marks of the truth and of the

Evangelist's spirit. The disciples were pursuing their usual occupation on the sea of Galilee ; a thing not unlikely, when we consider, that Paul followed his trade of tent-making, even during his ministry. Jesus here suddenly appeared to them. By the miraculous draught of fishes, they recognised the Lord's presence ; and the impetuous Peter immediately swam to him. They prepared a repast, and the Lord eats with them, not because he needed food, but as a symbolic act of love, which is far more significant among the Oriental than the Western nations. As the draught of fishes must remind the disciples, especially Peter, of their first call to be disciples ; so this meal with their Lord was a token, that the Saviour would eat with them, after their work should be ended, that blessed feast, which the Lord has prepared for his own, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of God. Even the disciples could not have needed the meal for their bodily necessities, since their dwellings were at hand.

Taking this view of the first half of the chapter, which relates to the draught of fishes, and the taking of food, we readily see its connexion with the second half, which gives the account of the Lord's three questions to Peter, and the prophecies of his future destiny. While the Apostle's mind was open to the greatness of his future career, the Lord leads him to think of the conditions of his success. Love to Christ and entire self-devotion were essential requisites. That the three-fold question of the Lord had reference to the three-fold denial of Peter, is too obvious to be mistaken. Tholuck lies evidently under a mistake in supposing, that, in the intervals of conversations with the disciples, the Lord addressed the second and third questions to Peter. For the immediate repetition of the question conveys the strong impression which Christ wished to produce. At first, Peter remained quite calm, and appealed to the Lord's own knowledge, but at the last question, he felt that he designed to inspire him with salutary humility, and he was troubled.

Still he could sincerely appeal to the reality of his love, and therefore the Lord confirmed the blessed commission : *feed my sheep*. There is also a second circumstance, in which Tholuck seems to have failed in the interpretation of this passage. He would refer the expression, *lovest thou me more than these*, back to the passage in Matthew, in which Peter had said, *although all shall be offended at thee, yet will not I*; as if Christ had wished to show, that Peter was still in error, regarding himself. But it is evident from previous passages of the Gospels, that Peter had actually a spiritual precedence of the other disciples, in respect to active energy. Hence it appears that it could be rightly said of him, that he loved more ardently than the others, and that the Saviour was not disposed to deny this, is obvious from the fact, that he appointed him shepherd of his sheep, without Peter having made any such confessions as this ; "I love thee far less than the others, since I could once deny thee." The purpose of Christ was not to show Peter, that he had no love, since he

actually had it. Yes, he even had it when he denied the Saviour, else he would not have returned to fidelity, so soon after the waves of darkness had passed over him. The purpose of the question was to lead the Apostle to perfect lowliness, and to remove all arrogant self-reliance. True lowliness does not consist in a man's saying he has no piety, when he actually has, for that would be insensibility, or false humility ; but it manifests itself in referring all one can attain to the workings of grace, not ascribing it to himself, as a certain, inalienable possession, but regarding them as transitory gifts, which the Lord, who gave, can take away at his own good pleasure. Then the soul remains meek and lowly, even amid every ornament of divine grace ; it does not receive it as its own property. This Peter had done ! The fire of love, in that ardor of spirit, which inspired him, overpowered him, and he imagined himself strong as a hero ; but when the ardor of feeling abated, he denied his Master in view of threatening dangers.

The charge, by which our Lord entrusted to Peter the pastoral care of the faithful, is followed by a solemn warning of the end of his earthly pilgrimage. The figurative language in which this warning is expressed, would have been far more wrested from its original meaning by commentators, had not the Evangelist himself adjoined an explanation. According to tradition, Peter died upon the cross, and the oldest historians of the Church refer the words to his crucifixion. It has been only recently supposed, that the words have reference only to imprisonment, since if understood as applying to crucifixion, the *girdle* must have been spoken of before the *stretching out of hands*. But it should be remembered, that the language of prophecy is always concise and obscure; hence it remains uncertain, whether the phrase, *gird thee*, refers to the binding the hands in the arrest, or to fastening to the cross. It is meanwhile sufficient, that the expressions chosen can be referred to this event, and the satisfactory application of them may have first occurred to John,

when he heard of the martyr-death of Peter. The stretching out of the hands, and binding to the cross, are not the only things expressed in this passage, but there is also a contrast between youth and age. The mention of youth is commonly altogether unperceived; the unmeaning antitheses of death with old age is the only thing perceived. But it is obvious, that half of the passage should not be taken literally, and the other figuratively; both should be taken literally, and both figuratively. The passage, accordingly first of all declares merely, that in youth man exerts his power without any control, but in old age feels his faculties restrained by weakness and in need of aid. Both parts of the passage have their meaning; they refer to youth and old age in the spiritual life. In the fulness of spiritual power, Peter freely exerted his energies, as seemed to him good; but in old age, he was much constrained, hard pushed, and compelled to go here and there against his will. These directions have a disciplinary aim; they were intended to divest the disciples of

all self-will and self-seeking. The main point of this discipline was afforded by Peter's crucifixion, in which that was literally fulfilled, which had already in a general sense been long realized by him. The Lord's remark to Peter is followed by a passage which, when taken in connexion with the Evangelist's explanation, is somewhat enigmatical. The Lord said to Peter, follow me. What follows seems clearly to indicate, that this remark was accompanied by a correspondent action. Christ turned away, Peter followed him, and on his way looked back and saw John approaching. This gave occasion to the question ; *Lord, and what shall this man do ?* The reason, why the Evangelist so explicitly describes his person, is obvious. He alludes to the last Supper, in which John sat nearer to Jesus than Peter. The latter did not venture to ask the question directly, but addressed it to Christ through John. Now the relation seems reversed ; Peter appears the nearer, and John, as it were, to be supplanted. The Evangelist's allusion to the

Supper, seems therefore necessary in order to make the connexion of Peter and John with Christ sufficiently obvious. To this, as it were jealous, or at least too inquisitive question of Peter, the Lord replied; *If I will that he tarry, till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.* The word, *tar-ry*, was understood by many of John's contemporaries to refer to his remaining alive on earth, and never dying: but the Evangelist rejects this idea, and without further explanation, merely repeats the Lord's words.

This whole passage becomes light and clear, if we, as already indicated, suppose a symbolical act, originating in the words relating to the *girdle*. The Lord would signify to Peter more fully and deeply the way he was to travel henceforth; it was the way of perseverance and of tribulation in the severest conflict with the world. The Lord represented this figuratively by withdrawing a few steps, which thus gave Peter occasion to draw nearer to him. Peter, somewhat depressed by thoughts of the

hard way, which he was to go, asked when he saw John approach him ; *Lord, and what shall this man do ?* Because this question sprung from a motive not entirely pure, that is from a sort of envious reference to the milder destiny of John, the reply of Christ savors somewhat of rebuke. Jesus declared to him, that it was his lot to follow faithfully, without any regard to others, but John was to remain until his coming. John must quietly await the day of his death, when the Lord shall come to call him, but Peter, in strife and conflict, must follow his master even to the cross. Experience constantly is showing us, that the lives of the faithful are thus different. In some, one heavy and bitter grief follows another, and all life is a bearing of the cross ; with others, life glides gently on, and free from these great troubles, they gently go to their eternal home. Such differences spring not from chance, but from divine appointment, since all dispensations, wisely ordered in accordance with human character, must serve to perfect the inward life. In Peter and John,

we behold, as it were, representatives of two wholly different dispositions and destinies, the impassioned and the gentle, even development, and to this the Lord refers, without detracting from the universal truth, that for all the way is narrow and the gate strait, that leads to life.

CONCLUSION.

HERE ends our consideration of the sublime development of the life of our Lord; he, who proceeding from the depths of the Godhead, taking root in the depths of humanity, presents a spectacle, incomparable in splendor, majesty, and beauty; overwhelming, even in its humility.* The per-

* This magnificent passage, from Jean Paul Richter's "Dawnings for Germany," is apt to this point; "An individual once trod the earth, who swayed remote ages, and founded an eternity of his own; gently blooming and pliant as a sun-flower, burning and drawing as the sun, he even with his mild aspect moved himself and nations, and centuries together towards the Universal and Primeval Sun. Did he exist, then is there a Providence — or he were it."

sected fruit of this life, the glorified Saviour, returned to the bosom of the Father, from which the impulse of love had sent forth the eternal Word. But Christ left to the world the impress of his appearing, and also a little band of friends, in whose hearts his spirit had found an abode. This little band was the germ of a new world, an embryo of a future, that had not been anticipated. Before many years passed away, this new creation began to exercise the sway of Christian life over the earth. The life, being, and nature of Christ became a legacy for the world; one century contended for his grave; another fought about his flesh and blood, another about his words; and sorrowful as it has been, and still is, to behold sin so often exciting war among men, it is yet consoling, that the object of such strife is such, as must put an end to all quarrelling — the Prince of Peace. He will finally set at rest all strife concerning himself.

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